Canada's Weekly Newsmagazine
Maclean's
August 23, 1999

SPECIAL REPORT
Runaway Kids

THE MILITARY
Poisoned Coffee Caper

BOOK EXCERPT
The Swissair Tragedy

CANADA'S OPEN DOOR





The arrival of boatloads of Chinese refugees ignites a national debate

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*Motor Trend, July 1999 (0-97 km/h) **Ward's Auto World, June 1999

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Cover photos by
Nick Didlick/Vancouver Sun, (right) Department of National Defence

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Cover



Nick Didlick/Vancouver Sun

12 Canada's open door

The arrival of the second group of boat people in a month on the B.C. coast has sparked a fierce debate over Canada's refugee policy. Critics say it is too lax, while defenders maintain it does the nation proud.

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Special Report

38 Runaway kids

Most runaway kids in Canada are escaping abuse and neglect. But some just like to run, and their parents, like Catherine's, find that they can't legally stop them.

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42 The Swissair tragedy

Author Stephen Kimber describes the moving experiences of fisherman Robert Conrad at the site of the Swissair crash off Nova Scotia last summer.



Andrew Vaughan/CP



Jamie Bryan/LIFE for Maclean's

22 The poisoned coffee caper

Were two former peacekeepers in Croatia slowly poisoned by their own comrades, or is the brass just blowing smoke? The military inquiry into sick soldiers takes a bizarre turn.

From the

Editor



Two visionaries, two legacies

Canada lost two visionaries last week whose accomplishments carry the gleam of permanency. Jean Drapeau, who died at 83 in Montreal, was perhaps the best-known mayor Canada has ever produced (page 28). Arthur Irwin, who passed away in his 102nd year in Victoria, was little known to the public of the 1990s, but had a profound impact in shaping the modern *Maclean's* (page 31).

Drapeau, whose six-week hospitalization and cause of death, characteristically, were not made public, was the architect of the new Montreal. He created Expo and the Expos, built the Metro, won the Olympic Games and established Montreal on the world stage as a proud symbol of the ingenuity of French Canada.

To be sure, there was the downside: the Big Owe and its collapsing roof, the hoarding erected to obscure slums and the indifference to sewage treatment. In late 1967, during one of our regular interviews, the mayor bristled when I pressed him about his inattention to poverty and pollution in the city. "Monsieur Lewis," he responded with a look of studied impatience, "the masses prefer prestige projects."

Certainly his longevity reinforced the point. He served as mayor for almost 30 years, the elections serving as referendums on his stewardship. Grandeur was his key theme. "People's lives do not have to be drab and dreary," he once observed. "They deserve something for the soul and noble visions." As he put it in a different context: "Let Toronto be Milan and Montreal can be Rome."



Irwin, Drapeau (right): inspiration

Editor Irwin was a phrasemaker of a different sort. He used words sparingly, much as a surgeon wields a scalpel, and often with the same assured results. During 24 years with *Maclean's*, the last five as editor, he opened the magazine up to the country. In 1927, he wrote a penetrating series on the brain drain that focused on the lack of job opportunities. In 1938, there was an investigative report on a military scandal that produced new regulations on weapons contracts. And as the man in charge between 1945 and 1950, he hired the best editors and writers he could find.

Above all, Irwin was a nationalist who believed firmly in the importance of an independent Canadian foreign policy and the integrity of the Canadian canon. In a conversation I had with Irwin from his home in Victoria in 1995 on the occasion of a *Maclean's* 90th anniversary party, he was much less interested in the festivities than in the issues of the day. Even approaching 100—or perhaps because he was nearing that milestone—Irwin fretted that Canadians had gone to sleep on the national unity issue and the grave possibility of losing Quebec.

In their own special ways, Drapeau and Irwin presided over two golden eras. Their legacies are an inspiration for anyone who aspires to serve the public good.

Robert Lewis

Newsroom Notes

Family heartbreak

When Researcher-Reporter Shanda Deziel began reporting this week's story about runaways, she discovered the problem has reached almost epidemic proportions in some cities, straining social services and endangering the kids themselves (page 38). Working with Life Editor James Deacon, neither Deziel nor Montreal Bureau Chief Brenda Branswell had any difficulty finding teens to interview about why they chose life on the street.

Most of the kids are fleeing abuse and neglect at home. But Deziel also found heartbreak among loving families left behind by rebellious teens. She talked to a mother whose 14-year-old girl suffers from cystic fibrosis, yet has run away more than 30 times in the last year. Deziel interviewed the daughter, who is hardened by living with a terminal illness and by her experiences on the run, but still knows she is hurting both her mother and herself. "I feel for both of them," Deziel says. "The mother has endured a devastating year, but for her daughter, running has become a way to deal with her problems, the way an alcoholic drinks to ease the pain."



Deziel, street life

Canada's Weekly Newsmagazine

Maclean's

Maclean's captures top media awards



The National Magazine Awards: Maclean's won the prestigious **President's Medal** for best overall article, "Rape in the Military" by Senior Writer Jane O'Hara; the same package also won the **Gold Award** for investigative reporting; the eighth annual ranking of universities by Assistant Managing Editor Ann Dowsett Johnston and staff won the **Gold Award** for editorial package. **Honourable Mentions** went to "Hungarian Rhapsody" and "Cirque de Success" by Maclean's film critic Brian D. Johnson and to Maclean's Winter Olympics package, "Gold Rush" by Executive Editor Bob Levin, Sports and Life Editor James Deacon and their colleagues.

The Canadian Journalism Foundation's "Excellence in Journalism" Award: This annual award recognizes the outstanding work of a journalistic organization. Maclean's was selected for devoting major resources to covering important public issues and for maintaining an unflinching commitment to journalistic integrity.

The Michener Award Honourable Mention: Presented to Maclean's for a series investigating troubles in the Canadian military, the award focuses on the public benefit generated by media projects.

In fact, Maclean's award-winning cover stories are credited with bringing about sweeping changes in the Canadian Forces and having a profound impact on university campuses across Canada.

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The Mail

The facts of life

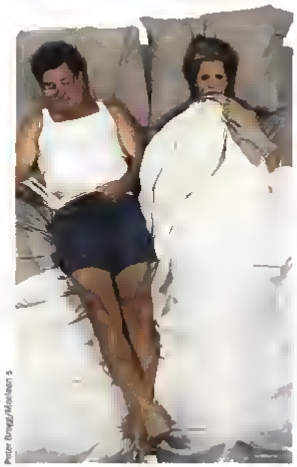
In your cover story "Sex & Marriage" (Aug. 9), a Calgary counsellor says sex is a "barometer, and it's usually the last thing to go. If couples get to the point where there is no sexuality anymore, the relationship is pretty much dead." Perhaps Calgary couples have sex drives that persist through marital difficulties, but it is a different matter on the West Coast. As a psychologist, I have counselled hundreds of couples over the past 22 years. It has been my experience that sex is usually the first thing to go, not the last. When a couple spends little time together talking and listening, having fun or simply hanging out, the sex will shut down. There is still lots of life in the marriage in spite of the repair work required to revitalize the relationship. Many couples are discouraged enough without hearing that they are finished just because the marriage has gone sexually flat.

Denis Boyd, Coquitlam, B.C.

You may not realize how cool it was to feature a gay couple among the pairs profiled in your "Sex & Marriage" cover story. Even better, the two men received no special treatment; they were integrated matter-of-factly into the piece. As a reader, I value that kind of fairness. I also appreciate your intelligent effort to reach out to all readers.

Michael Kaminer, New York City

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Peter Bregg/Maclean's

Many single mothers are working and caring for their families in the absence of sex. The exhausting demands of single-parenting leave little time for nurturing a new relationship. When coupled with the safety of the children, single mothers have too many priorities to fulfil before sex can even be considered, and this spans years. When will a voice for single mothers be heard? We have the same needs as everyone else.

Natasha Koziol, London, Ont.

I can't believe you did a cover story on sex and marriage without mentioning the Internet. Where do you people live, Pleasantville? Thousands of Canadian married people are meeting, either electronically or in person, planning their next rendezvous, as their unsuspecting spouses read the paper, watch TV or work on their "urgent" project.

Raymond M. Hébert, Winnipeg

Breaking new ground

You are to be congratulated for perhaps the fairest coverage of the Canadian wine industry in a long time in a mainstream publication ("From plonk to praise," Business, Aug. 9). I'm not involved in the industry except as a consumer, but I have some firsthand experience in the emergence of the Canadian wine scene onto the international stage. As a young reporter, I covered the battle by Don Ziraldo and Karl Kaiser (Inniskillen Wines) with the Ontario government to obtain the first new winery licence in Ontario in about 50 years, breaking the ground for the explosion we are now experiencing. I have watched old standbys evolve or disappear, and new giants like Paul M. Bosc at Château des Charmes appear on the scene. His "castle" near St. Davids is an inspiring example of entrepreneurship. Driving down Highway 8 through Niagara on the Wine Route could take weeks if you stopped at all the new wineries. Their products are superior to most imports.

Tim Fletcher, Grimsby, Ont.

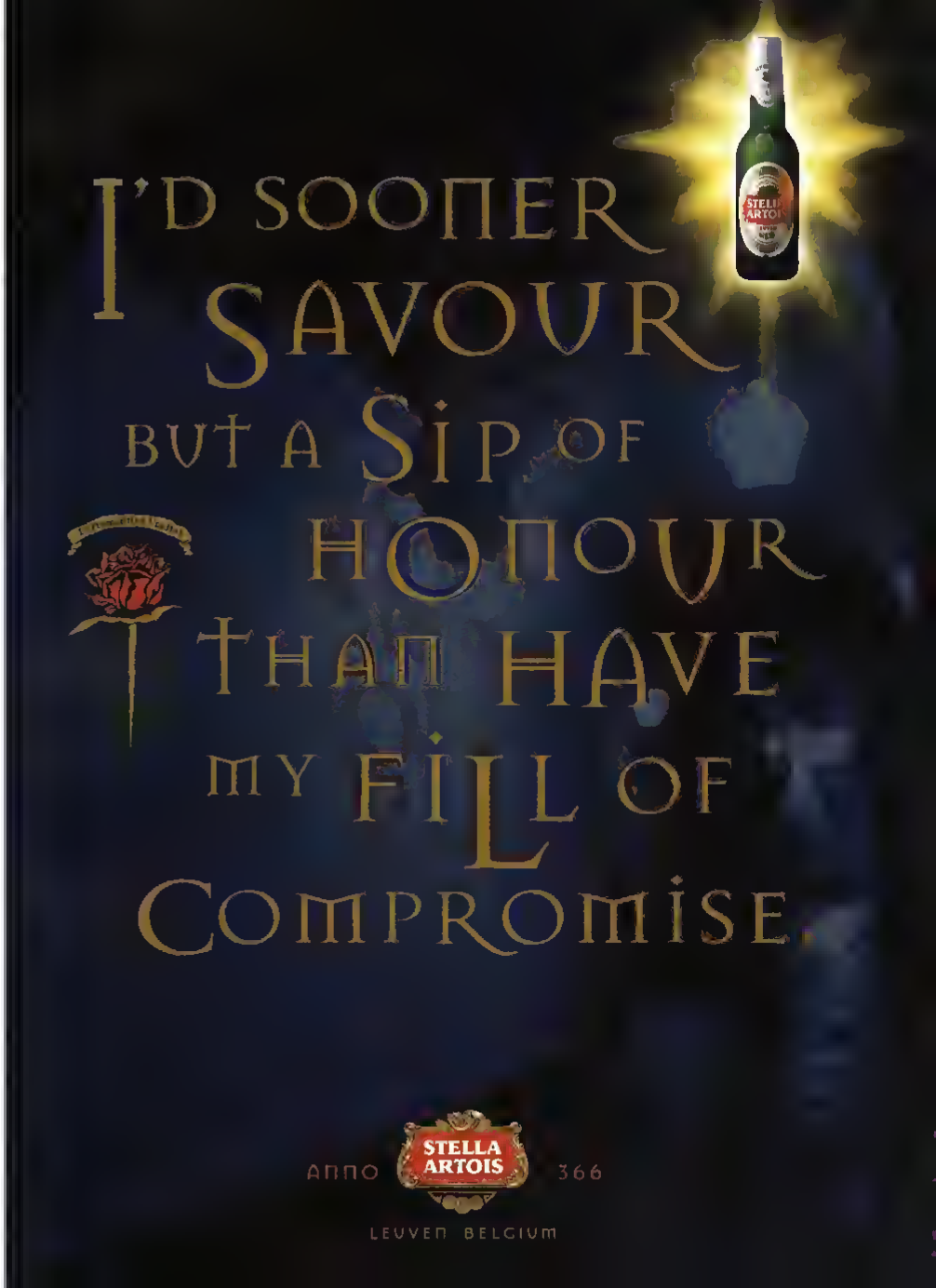
The past is prologue

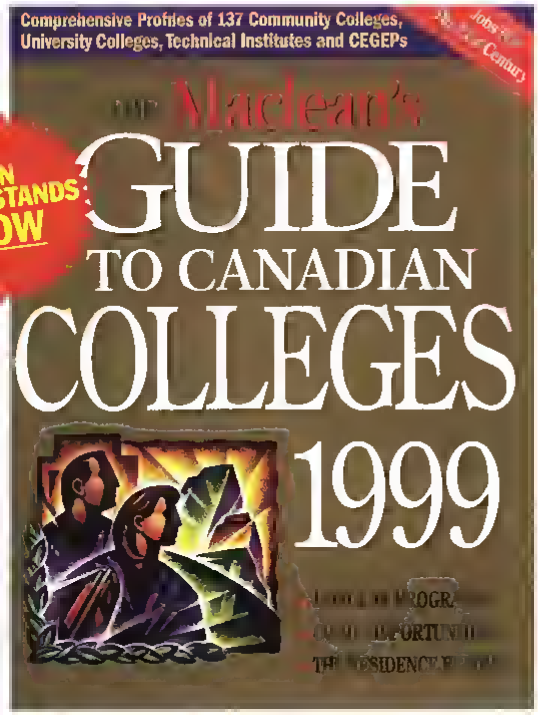
***Maclean's* is** the one magazine I continue to read from cover to cover. Your exceptional writers expand on the headline stories—which most of us hurriedly read in newspapers—to the point that we now feel connected to the issues that matter. Then there's the pure delight in reading articles such as "An overdose of nostalgia" (Column, Aug. 2), in which Bob Levin muses that "the past is safer—the worst has already happened." When I cross-referenced this piece with the article "Look who's paranoid now" (Books, Aug. 2), I concluded that we really don't understand what happened in the past. As someone once said, if you live long enough you will learn that everything you had ever known was a lie. But then, it's the perception that drives the world, every bit as much as reality.

George Wasylyk, Mississauga, Ont.

Reward ratio

Finally, someone has touched on the most valid reason for pursuing personal tax cuts in this country: simply because the average Canadian deserves it. As you point out in "Singing the tax-cut refrain" (Cover, Aug. 2), there has been no increase in disposable income in the '90s. Canadians are working longer and more efficiently for less. Where





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Publisher: Paul Jones

have the benefits of this harder, smarter work gone? So far, they have gone to corporate profits and taxes. Personal tax cuts could serve as a reward for average Canadians and a vote of confidence from our government.

Jim Gibson, Mississauga, Ont

Successive Canadian governments' destruction of the Canadian economy and the imposition of unbelievably high taxes were not noticed only by *Maclean's* writers, business lobbyist Thomas d'Aquino and Nortel CEO John Roth. It was observed by hard-rock miners and other citizens. Behind the protection of high tariffs, a hundred years ago, Canada built an enormous industry. Since the Second World War, governments allowed inflation to go wild. At the same time, we kept our tariffs so low we allowed sweatshop imports to be dumped in Canada, which put our own industries out of business. The thing that has kept Canada going is the export of our vast resources, such as wheat, lumber, minerals and the high technology of a few brains who have stayed home and are helping to pay our ridiculously high taxes.

Frank Southern, Sudbury, Ont

Spreading the word

John Kenneth Galbraith writes that his father, while speaking to farmers in an election campaign, climbed onto a manure pile and "apologized profusely for speaking from the Tory platform" ("Galbraith writ large," Books, Aug. 2). I heard that he apologized while speaking from a manure spreader, at which point a Tory in the audience yelled "Fire it up! It's never had a better load."

Jean McKenzie, London, Ont.

May I be the skunky dissentet to your three-page Galbraith picnic? What you ignore are the colossal bonehead mistakes about socialism, communism and the Soviet Union he made over the years. In a 1984 *New Yorker* article, Galbraith wrote that the Soviet economy was making "great material progress." His evidence: "One sees it in the appearance of solid well-being of the people on the streets, the close to murderous traffic, the incredible exfoliation of apartment houses." The secret of such achievements: "Partly, the Russian system succeeds because, in contrast with the Western industrial economies, it makes full use of its manpower." It is amazing that Galbraith could have written such schlock—in 1984!—when any intelligent economist knew the day of reckoning for the Soviet economy was at hand.

Arnold Beichman, Research Fellow, Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Stanford, Calif.

Truth and taxes

When I moved from Canada to the United States nearly two years ago, my parents bought my husband and me a subscription to *Maclean's* magazine. We were originally grateful for this gift, but can no longer stomach its unremittingly depressing rhetoric about our beloved homeland, which consistently presents the voice of greed as if it were the voice of truth. I am particularly weary of the myth that the "real" reason for the brain drain is lower U.S. taxes ("Professors spouting nonsense," Diane Francis, Aug. 2). There are many reasons why scholars, like me, leave Canada, but the simple reason that I moved—and then very reluctantly—to the United States was because I was offered a good position in a respectable university. Despite my best efforts, I couldn't find a comparable position in Canada. It is true that my basic U.S. personal income tax is a little lower than my Canadian income tax used to be, but when all contributions are counted the difference is minimal. Furthermore, when I add expenses for health-care premiums, co-payments for health-care services, and insurance against catastrophic illness not covered by most health-care plans, the difference is more than made up. I suspect that many of the upper-middle-class Canadians who move here for lower taxes will be disappointed to find out that, one way or another, you pay.

C. Jean Campbell, Pine Lake, Ga.

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Editorial Update

Nominate 100 Young Canadians

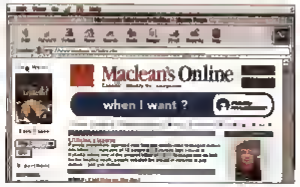
In keeping with what matters to Canadians, Maclean's will present its list of 100 Canadian "up-and-comers" to watch for in its special year-end millennium issue.

Maclean's invites readers to nominate people who have made an outstanding contribution to the world around them. Since its inception, Maclean's has made it a priority to probe the mood of the country to find out what affects, moves and touches Canadians. This special year-end report is no exception.

The ideal candidates are either students or still relatively early in their careers. In addition to demonstrating excellence in at least one field, they have also shown concern for the public good, in either their work achievements or spare time. Please do not nominate family members. Submissions should contain some details of the candidates achievements, contact numbers, and at least one other reference. The deadline is September 13, 1999. Nominations can be made either by e-mail to: *nominations@macleans.ca* OR by mail to the magazine at 777 Bay Street, 7th floor, Toronto, ON M5W 1A7.

No nominations will be accepted by telephone.

Newsstand Notes



Designed with subscribers in mind, the Maclean's new Web site (www.macleans.ca) offers full access to all of the news, stories and profiles featured in the current issue of the magazine, available on the Sunday before the printed magazine hits newsstands. As well, Maclean's subscribers have access to a searchable archive of issues from the past six months—perfect for school assignments or business needs—and can review the status of their subscriptions. Non-subscribers are invited to scan highlights of all the stories featured in the current issue of Maclean's, plus check out special sections on film, music, technology, personal finance, education and health.

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20 YEARS OF FLARE 1978-1998

Notes

Edited by Tanya Davies



Hu Imeh/AP

The paparazzi go overboard on a royal chase

"Willie's Fillies" is probably not the way any of them would choose to be known. It is, after all, a rather inelegant description of three lithe and lovely young women, two of whom carry with pride the double-barrelled surnames so favoured by the British aristocracy. But it is part of the price they have paid for the privilege of soaking up the Greek sun aboard the Alexander, a 120-m private yacht luxurious enough to boast 40 separate suites as well as a swimming pool on every deck. And for joining another passenger onboard—17-year-old Prince William, the handsome heir to the British throne. Since each was a guest of the prince, invited to join him and his family for a floating holiday, the women soon found themselves subject to unwanted, and certainly undignified, scrutiny.



Russell Boyce/Reuters

Prince William; the Alexander (top); scrutiny of his guests

The infamous London tabloids were at it again. For the past two weeks, the Alexander—dubbed the "Love Boat" by the *Sun*—has been trailed by a ventable posse of paparazzi, close to 300 photographers in all, telephoto lenses in hand. All have been eager to capture on film any of the Alexander's passengers—Prince Charles and his longtime mistress, Camilla Parker Bowles, for instance, or William's boisterous 14-year-old brother, Harry. But the real prize would have been a shot of William in close contact with one of the *Sun*'s so-called Fillies: Laura Parker Bowles, 21, 17-year-old Amelia d'Elanger or, most tantalizing of all, Davina Duckworth-Chad, the 19-year-old art student who recently earned the sobriquet "Deb of the Web," the result of a recent Internet modelling job. However, as the trip drew to a close last week, nary a photograph had appeared, not even a grainy snapshot. William's guests may be, as the London *Daily Mail* asserted, "shapely shipmates." But they also know a thing or two about discretion.

Best-Sellers

Fiction

		POSITION LAST WEEK
1.	**MOTHER OF PEARL,** Melinda Haynes (8)	2
2.	**BLACK NOTICE,** Patricia Cornwell (1)	
3.	**HEARTWOOD,** James Lee Burke (1)	
4.	**DEATH DU JOUR,** Kathy Reichs (11)	8
5.	**WHITE OLEANDER** Janet Fitch (14)	1
6.	**HANNIBAL,** Thomas Harris (10)	3
7.	**THE OUTLANDISH COMPANION** Diana Gabaldon (5)	4
8.	**THE GIRLS' GUIDE TO HUNTING AND FISHING** Melissa Bank (1)	
9.	**THE GIRL WHO LOVED TOM GORDON,** Stephen King (17)	8
10.	**EAST OF THE MOUNTAINS** David Guterson (3)	10

Nonfiction

		POSITION LAST WEEK
1.	**SHADOW** Bob Woodward (7)	3
2.	**NAME-DROPPING,** John Kenneth Galbraith (4)	4
3.	**ENCORE PROVENCE,** Peter Mayle (12)	5
4.	**BELLA TUSCANY** Frances Mayes (18)	1
5.	**THE FIRST WORLD WAR,** John Keegan (10)	2
6.	**THE LEXUS AND THE OLIVE TREE,** Thomas Friedman (1)	
7.	**LIFE STRATEGIES,** Phillip McGraw (1)	
8.	**THE PITY OF WAR,** Niall Ferguson (5)	9
9.	**THE CORROSION OF CHARACTER,** Richard Sennett (2)	8
10.	**BRUCE CHATWIN** Nicholas Shakespeare (10)	10

() Weeks on list

Compiled by Brian Bethune

Funny factoids



Bill McLain

Spanning the useful to the bizarre to the comical, *Do Fish Drink Water? Puzzling and Improbable Questions and Answers* (William Morrow), by Bill McLain, is an informative collection of facts and anecdotes. McLain, the official Web master for Xerox, used the Internet to research quirky questions, such as, did Thomas Crapper really invent the flush toilet? No, that was his employee, Albert Giblin. How many colours of M & M candies are there? Twenty-one in total. And the answer to the question in the title: yes, fish do drink water.

Bonjour, Bubba

Some good ol' boys of the southern United States are making a new independence bid—and claiming inspiration from an unlikely source, the Parti Québécois. The Southern Party is a new U.S. political coalition that aims to win power in the South, and eventually declare independence for the states of the old Confederacy, much like the PQ in Canada. Its Web site pays homage to the PQ, and claims Southerners have been targets of "an insidious and incremental campaign of cultural cleansing not unlike that which has faced the people of Quebec."



Allen Mercer/AP

George Kalas, head of the Southern Party; party supporters (below), inspired by the PQ



Allen Mercer/AP

The Southern National Committee organized the party late last year when it became clear that President Bill Clinton was not going to be impeached over his affair with Monica Lewinsky. "That was the final straw," says Jerry Baxley, the group's vice-chairman and an auctioneer near Richmond, Va. The party aims to promote "southern values"—it believes in low taxes and the right to bear arms and is against abortion—and is sensitive to suggestions that it might be a cover for white-power types, saying that everyone in the South qualifies as a Southerner, regardless of race. And they *really* want to end jokes about "white trash" and "rednecks." "We're the only group left that it's politically correct to beat up on," complains Baxley. "Bubba deserves respect just like everyone else." As for the PQ, Southern Party organizers haven't actually met with anyone from Quebec. "But we'd love to get together with the folks from the PQ," says Baxley. "They haven't given up, and neither will we."

Pop Movies

1.	**The Blair Witch Project** (154/2)	$3,964,810
2.	**The Sixth Sense** (137/1)	$3,408,650
3.	**Runaway Bride** (206/2)	$2,575,940
4.	**The Thomas Crown Affair** (152/1)	$2,204,940
5.	**Deep Blue Sea** (189/2)	$1,612,520
6.	**Mystery Men** (134/1)	$1,381,910
7.	**Inspector Gadget** (157/3)	$1,340,770
8.	**The Haunting** (165/3)	$821,920
9.	**American Pie** (128/5)	$767,110
10.	**The Iron Giant** (137/1)	$626,310

Top movies in Canada, ranked according to box office receipts during the seven days that ended on Aug 12. (In brackets: numbers of screens/weeks showing.)

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Thai troubles



A trip to Thailand turns into a nightmare for Darlene (Kate Beckinsale) and Alice (Claire Danes) after police find heroin in their luggage in *Brokedown Palace*. Despite their pleas of innocence and expectations of special treatment because they are American, they are sentenced to life in prison.

Passages

Retired: Steffi Graf, 30, who dominated women's tennis for a decade, in Heidelberg, Germany. Graf used her powerful forehand shot to win 22 Grand Slam singles titles and more than 100 tournaments on the WTA Tour. She spent a record 377 weeks as the No. 1 player in the world during her 17-year career. Struggling with injuries, Graf made a comeback to beat top-ranked Martina Hingis to win the French Open last June.



David Cannon/AP

Steffi Graf

Died: Former Hollywood star **Victor Mature,** 86, of cancer, in San Diego County. His best-known roles were Doc Holliday in *My Darling Clementine* (1946) and Samson in *Samson and Delilah* (1949).

Died: Jennifer Paterson, 71, co-star of the popular British cooking show *Two Fat Ladies*, of lung cancer, in London.

Died: Harry (The Hat) Walker, 80, who got the deciding hit for the St. Louis Cardinals in the 1946 World Series and led the National League in hitting in 1947, of complications from a stroke, in Birmingham, Ala.

Died: Nerine Shatner, 40, wife of actor **William Shatner,** of drowning in the family's swimming pool, in Los Angeles.

Died: Former federal deputy minister of justice and Rhodes Scholar **John Tait,** 54, of cancer, in Ottawa.

Recovering: Hall of Fame pitcher **Jim (Catfish) Hunter,** 53, after falling down concrete stairs and hitting his head, in Hertford, N.C. Hunter, who was diagnosed last year with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease), earned five World Series rings with Oakland and New York and became the first multimillionaire baseball player when he signed with the Yankees in 1974.

Resigned: Deirdre McMurdy, 37, as business editor of CTV, in Toronto. She will now produce and host a business show for the Prime Television Network.

Explorer

The bulwark bra

Forget pushups and leopard-skin prints, the must-have undergarment for the year 2000 is destined to be the Techno Bra. Created by British designer Kursty Groves, 26, it offers comfort, support—and personal security against attack. How? Try a heart monitor, a global positioning system locator, a cellular phone and a recording device, all embedded in a three-millimetre-thick, clear gel-like lining, which can be removed during washing. The alarm is triggered by a sudden and abnormal increase in the heart rate—not accidentally, such as during exercise when the heart rate increases more gradually—or can be activated manually. Then the cell phone automatically dials the police while the GPS locator reveals where the woman is. Made of an electricity-conducting material, the brassiere looks and feels like a regular padded bra, and comes with a fail-safe button, built in to the front clasp, to stop false alarms.

Groves, a recent graduate of the industrial design engineering course at London's Royal College of Art, will work with several companies to get the bra to market by next year. She hopes to offer it in a variety of styles and colours, retailing for $120 to $240. "It is something," says Groves, "that women can keep close to their chests to help them feel less vulnerable."



Almost the smallest digital camera

In an age when most technology has "the shelf life of a banana," according to one Silicon Valley CEO, corporate marketing departments are well-advised to avoid superlatives when launching products. Hence the asterisk behind Fuji Photo Film Canada's claim that its new MX-2700 digital camera is "the smallest and lightest mega-pixel model available." That was as of March, 1999, when promotional materials were written, and it held up until the launch earlier this summer. But now, Fuji marketing director Ken Jure concedes that one competitor, Canon, has since released a similar-sized product. "We tend to be careful about these claims," Jure adds, "because sometimes the advertising is out there longer than the camera."

All that said, the MX-2700 is small—the size of a Walkman and weighing a mere 240 g, it easily fits in a shirt pocket. And Fuji has outdistanced its competitors with a 2.3-million pixel sensor, the device that determines resolution and quality of the photos. But it isn't cheap to be ahead of the digital pack. the MX-2700 retails for $1,199.

D'Arcy Jenish

Backstage



Anthony Wilson-Smith

The Liberals' Black knight

Earlier this decade, Jean Chrétien was visiting his cottage on Lac des Piles in his St-Maurice riding when he took a political aide out on the lake in his boat. By then, it had been more than 25 years since Chrétien lived in the area full time. But as they cruised, Chrétien described in detail the occupants of each cottage, their background and political allegiances. It was a remarkable display, the aide recalled later—all the more so from a man who can't always recall the names of people he has known for years.

Similarly, Chrétien can tell you without pausing who backed him in his 1984 and 1990 Liberal leadership bids, and more to the point, who did not—and those allegiances are reflected in his inner circle. When it comes to things that really matter to him, Chrétien neither forgets, nor forgives. He shares those qualities with Conrad Black. Something else in common is that neither has a seat in Great Britain's House of Lords, thanks to Ottawa's last-minute intervention to block Black's appointment by Prime Minister Tony Blair. Now, both share the same court case—Black's $25,000 civil suit against Chrétien for opposing the move.

The squabble recalls the observation attributed to Black's friend Henry Kissinger about campus politics and bickering between professors: the reason for so much infighting is that the stakes are so *low*. Black, who has all the money and power anyone could dream of, wants the ceremonial appointment because . . . he wants it, and that's his business. Chrétien, who is furious over stories in Black's *National Post* about pork-barreling in his riding, doesn't want Black to have the appointment because . . . well, Black wants it. It's hard to see how a matter between a British citizen (which Black also is) and his government is our Prime Minister's business. But Chrétien is intervening because he *can*—at least for now.

There is a lot to admire about Chrétien as a politician and person, but not his churlishness towards foes. There's a difference between being tough and mean, and the Prime Minister, regrettably, has as much of the second characteristic as he does, commendably, of the first. Sometimes it shows in small ways, such as his joke after protesters were dispersed with pepper spray by the RCMP during the 1997 APEC Vancouver summit. "Pepper," he said, "is something I put on my steak." Other times, his malice is more considered, such as the way he let stand unsubstantiated allegations that former prime minister Brian Mulroney accepted kickbacks in the so-called Airbus case. One reason for Chrétien's unpopularity in Quebec is his visceral animosity to sovereigntist opponents. By contrast, Pierre Trudeau mocked their logic, but not their sentiments.

Forget the official line that Ottawa was obliged to block Black's appointment because of an obscure nonbinding 1919 parliamentary resolution. The Prime Minister could ignore that, or change it in about a day if he wished. France regularly names francophone Quebecers as members of its Légion d'Honneur—and the honorees aren't even citizens of the host country. Moreover, the Chrétien government made John Kenneth Galbraith an honorary member of the Order of Canada in 1997—and he's been an American citizen since 1937. Somehow, Washington concealed its outrage.

The truth is Black, despite money and influence, is an easy hit. Pick on him, and you appear to strike a blow for the underdog—though it's not clear why it's the job of a prime minister to pester the rich just for the sake of it, or because someone annoys him. Black, with his conservative views and brusque impatience with those silly enough to disagree, is someone large- and small-l liberals love to disparage. And British Prime Minister Tony Blair, a Labourite who nominated Black at the request of Conservatives, likely isn't too cross about Canadian meddling.

But dislike of a person and their politics isn't proper grounds for a government to discriminate. And the dirty truth for Black-haters is that in many ways, he's miscast as The Dark Knight he's made out to be. Even those of us with only a nodding acquaintance with Black know he neither receives nor asks for credit for many thoughtful private gestures, ranging from large charitable donations to personal courtesies. When his old friend Montreal city councillor and columnist Nick Auf der Maur fell ill with the cancer that eventually killed him, Black helped arrange his medical care, and then (with Mulroney) became one of the biggest contributors to a fund in Auf der Maur's memory. And when a Montreal *Gazette* reporter who first worked for Black 30 years ago became seriously ill last year, Black wrote a warm get-well letter recalling their initial meeting in perfect detail.

In fact, the Liberals, with their late embrace of free trade, should cite Black, with his foreign ownership of London's *Daily Telegraph* and other papers, as a homegrown success making good abroad. If he was a product, rather than a person, they would doubtless do so. As it is, this amounts to a straight asset swap. We sent the proprietor of one national newspaper to London to live in return, we're now receiving their tired, poor and huddled masses from Fleet Street to run our other one, *The Globe and Mail*. Which option is preferable: a Canadian running a British media institution—or Brits running one of ours? Long may you reign, Lord Black of Bay Street.

Canada's OPEN DOOR

A new load of boat people sparks calls for a tougher stance on refugees

By Tom Fennell

The frightened passengers crammed into the bow of the fishing trawler peered through the grey mist, anxious for their first glimpse of Canada. As large swells lifted the ship, the towering cedar forests and granite cliffs of the Queen Charlotte Islands suddenly loomed out of the morning fog. The air force had been tracking the vessel and its cargo of 131 Chinese refugees for two days. Desperate to escape, the ship's Korean captain finally nosed it on to the rocky driftwood-strewn coast and ordered his human cargo, dressed in light summer clothes, over the side. As they scrambled ashore, worried mothers held their children, some as young as 8, to shield them against the mist and rain. Others, fighting off the numbing cold and fatigue, came close to collapse—but all somehow had survived 58 gruelling days at sea in appalling conditions. The following day, as they arrived in Port Hardy on the north coast of Vancouver Island, logger Jerry Higginson greeted them with a squeaky version of *O Canada* on his trumpet. "We have the greatest country in the world," said Higginson. "Who can blame them for wanting to come here?"

Many did. While Higginson's generous view is widely shared, the newcomers—the second such landing on B.C. shores this summer—triggered a fierce debate over Canada's open-door refugee policy, which critics say extends a virtual invitation to illegal migrants. The debate is about to grow even more intense. Late last week, as the refugees were being transferred by bus to CFB Esquimalt, near Victoria, the military was on alert for more boatloads of Chinese migrants. Canadian intelligence officials were tracking a fishing boat bound for Canada's East Coast—also carrying hundreds of Chinese—that reportedly left Lithuania in early August. Meanwhile, U.S. immigration agents discovered another 132 illegal Chinese in the hold of a freighter docked in Savannah, Ga., that had just arrived from Lithuania. And the U.S. Coast Guard announced that it had boarded a suspicious cargo ship in the Pacific Ocean near the Mariana Islands, an American protectorate south of Japan. Onboard they discovered 100 Chinese migrants, many of whom said they were trying to reach Vancouver.



The newcomers are taken from the Queen Charlottes to Port Hardy. 'We have the greatest country in world. Who can blame them for wanting to come here?'

Nick Didlick/Newcastle Sun

Opponents of Canada's refugee system, such as Reform party immigration critic Leon Benoit, contend that Canada is known as a soft touch—where virtually anyone can easily claim refugee status. As if to underscore his charge, on Aug. 9 two Tanzanians jumped from a cargo ship into the St. Lawrence River near Quebec City. Minutes later, Canadian Coast Guard officers rescued the men, who were quickly released after being examined in hospital. Their names were added to the growing number of people claiming refugee status, which has jumped from 12,091 people seeking asylum in 1989 to 23,838 in 1998.

Canada's current refugee policy has been in place for 49 years. Immediately on arrival a claimant can ask for refugee status. Smugglers often coach migrants on what to say and how to react when filing a claim. Once that claim is made, the newcomer is allowed to work, get free medical care and apply for social assistance while awaiting a process that can take months or, more likely, years.

Many Canadians found it galling that only 37 of 123 who



Department of National Defence

The refugees await help on the rocks at Gilbert Bay, huddling for warmth

Caplan rejects the idea that boat people should simply be sent home without a refugee hearing

arrived from China by boat in July were still being held late last week, suspected of smuggling. Those set free are now looking for work, and in some cases, have started applying for social assistance. Some Chinese who came to Canada legally are outraged that the refugees are being welcomed. "The law should change," said Denck Cheng, honorary chairman of the Vancouver-based Canadian Fujian Friendship Association. "The smugglers are challenging the judicial system of the country."

Benoit argues that unless the laws are toughened, thousands more will attempt to sneak through the back door of the immigration system. "MPs on the coast have just been flooded with complaints," he said. "To a person, they are saying we can't be seen as an easy target." But defenders of the system argue that it is a shining example of Canada's humanity, and that the often-lengthy process is necessary to ensure that genuine refugees get a chance to prove their cases. "I hear the Reform party ripping their hair out," says Victor Wong, executive director of the Vancouver Association of Chinese Canadians. "What is it about these people that triggers this kind of visceral reaction? Is it because they all came at once on a boat, don't speak English and have yellow skin? We have to let the process play itself out."



Adrian Wyld/CP

Caplan, new measures

The issue is likely to get more intense as the world's population, now crossing the six-billion mark, expands ever more rapidly. As people become increasingly desperate to escape impoverished lands, vast numbers of so-called economic refugees are willing to risk their lives to get to a rich country (page 18). Sometimes, Canada is only a stop on the way. American authorities are complaining about the increasing numbers of Mexican illegals who fly to Canada and then walk back across the relatively unguarded Canadian border. U.S. officials see a huge potential problem on the B.C. coast. "This is just the beginning," says Eugene Davis, deputy chief of the U.S. Border Patrol in Blaine, Wash. "I wonder how many other ships have come in that nobody's seen."

As the pressure mounts, the federal government hopes to patch up the system by making it harder to smuggle humans into the country. Last week, newly appointed Immigration Minister Elinor Caplan, who is from multiethnic Toronto, said she planned to put more resources into the interception of illegal migrants, raise the penalty for smuggling and lock up suspect migrants rather than allowing them to go free while awaiting a hearing. But she rejected any suggestion that people like those who came ashore in the Queen Charlottes should be returned home without a hearing. "Canadians value human life," Caplan told *Maclean's*. "We mustn't do anything that would cause a tragic result—even if our laws are not being respected."

The latest debate over just how many rights refugees should enjoy began in earnest on July 19, when the RCMP stopped the first ship, which was in appalling condition, and towed it to shore in Port Hardy. Then early last month, authorities received a tip from international intelligence sources that a second ship was going to try to drop its human cargo off Canada's west coast. Long-range Aurora patrol aircraft finally spotted the ship on Aug. 9 in international waters, 330 km off the Queen Charlottes. The ship's captain, realizing he had been discovered, led authorities on a cat-and-mouse chase.

The coast guard dispatched the patrol cutter Tanu, carrying 12 immigration officers, eight RCMP and a team of translators the following day to intercept the vessel. But the Korean ship's captain eluded detection just long enough to order his passengers ashore at about 11:30 a.m. on the rocky, windswept shore in Gilbert Bay, the most southerly point in the Queen Charlottes.

The refugees, who had spent their last two days at sea without food or water, had no idea where they were. Some of the men scouted for a road out of the wilderness, while others huddled for warmth by bonfires. Hours later, they jumped up and waved at two search planes that finally appeared overhead. While the group was being cared for, an air force Aurora radioed the escaping trawler to turn back. To the Canadians' surprise, it complied. After a heavily armed RCMP team aboard the force's patrol boat Inkster finally caught up with the smugglers, they were arrested and charged with aiding a group of people to enter the country illegally and causing a person to disembark at sea. Using helicopters, rescuers also rounded up almost 12 stragglers who had fled into the dense bush. According to the RCMP, some of those who tried to hide were among 18 gang enforcers who travelled with the migrants. And as the relieved refugees arrived in Port Hardy, most looked dazed but happy—and some even seemed to be chuckling as they were led ashore.

Like the refugees on the earlier ship, the group plucked from the shores of the Queen Charlottes was also from China's Fujian province, which sits across from Taiwan about halfway between Hong Kong to the south and Shanghai to the north. The Fujianese have a long tradition of going abroad to start new lives, and they are not alone in their seaborne quest to create a new home in Canada. In 1986, 152 Sri Lankans were rescued from two lifeboats off the Newfoundland coast, and in 1987, 173 Sikhs from India arrived in Nova Scotia by freighter.

Then, as now, there were cries to toughen the refugee system. International authorities, however, say the refugee-smuggling business has become much more sophisticated. Jim Fisher, an Asian crime expert with the Ottawa-based Criminal Intelligence Service Canada, an information-gathering organization, says that Fujianese have become a key part of the effort to smuggle Chinese to the West. Experts believe that last year alone, nearly 100,000 people were smuggled overseas from China, the majority of them from Fujian province. According to the Geneva-based International Organization of Migration, the illegal trade in humans generated about $180 million for foreign smugglers targeting Canada last year. To pay the smuggler's fee, often $57,000 or more, many migrants agree to become virtual slaves. Their contracts are sold to employers, such as restaurant owners, who pay the new arrivals a subsistence wage until the debt is discharged. Some must work as prostitutes or drug runners to pay back the money.

While much of the current debate is fuelled by the high-profile boat people, most phoney refugees from China—and other places—come in by plane. Renald Gilbert, an official at the Canadian Embassy in Beijing, says migrants fly out of China using fake visas, or altered ones, perhaps carrying the passport of a well-travelled businessman. On the plane, Gilbert says, the documents are destroyed or turned over to another smuggler so they can be used again. Nearly 5,000 people claimed refugee status at Canadian airports last year.

Two women from a tiny village in Fujian told *Maclean's* about a harrowing attempt they made to get to the United States after being flown to Toronto by smugglers earlier this year. Authorities arrested Yanhua Wang, 24, and Meiling Zheng, 29, in January as they tried to cross the U.S. border near Buffalo, where they were found in a wooden box bolted under a transport truck. Zheng said she hoped to join her husband who had been working illegally in New York City for six years, while Wang said she wanted to escape political persecution in her homeland. "Almost every household in Fujian has someone in their family being smuggled abroad," said Wang. "If you don't have a family member in a foreign country, people think there is something wrong."

The pair paid almost $47,000 apiece to a so-called snakehead, the point man who recruits people to be smuggled abroad. "The snakeheads are very powerful," said Wang cau-



Joe Bertus/Maclean's

How to become a refugee in Canada

THE APPLICATION

On arrival in Canada, a newcomer can ask to claim refugee status. Some get a questionnaire to mail in to Immigration Canada, others are interviewed immediately. Those without documents can be detained until they establish who they are. But unless they are found to have a serious criminal record, to pose a security risk (e.g., a terrorist background) or to have previously been ordered deported, the claim is passed to the independent Immigration and Refugee Board for a hearing. At this point, the claimant is eligible for medical care and social assistance, and can work in Canada.
Elapsed time:
a few hours to 28 days

THE HEARING

When the IRB hearing comes up, claimants—normally aided by a lawyer—explain why they fled their country. Under UN guidelines, they must show they have grounds to fear persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, social group or political opinion. If the board—usually two people—agrees, the claimant can apply for permanent residency within 180 days of receiving a written decision.
Elapsed time:
three to 18 months

THE APPEALS

If the IRB says no, claimants must leave the country within 30 days or face arrest and deportation—unless they appeal. Within 15 days, they can apply for a review in the Federal Court, which can order a new IRB hearing. Concurrently, they can ask for reconsideration by a special unit of Immigration Canada. In some cases—notably when marrying a Canadian citizen or resident—they can apply to stay permanently on humanitarian and compassionate grounds. If all of these fail, they are again told, by mail, that they must leave Canada within 30 days. But unless they record their exit under a voluntary procedure, Immigration Canada has no way of knowing whether they have left.
Elapsed time: three months to (very rarely) 10 years or more

'Every time someone tries to raise the refugee issue, they are accused of being racist'



Chuck Stoody/CP

The crew under arrest in Port Hardy dumping human cargo

tiously. "We don't want to put the lives of our family at risk by revealing too many details." Landing in Toronto, Wang and Zheng declared refugee status and then were taken by the smugglers to the U.S. border area and ordered to crawl under the truck. "The winds were cutting my face," said Zheng. "My whole body was shaking." Their lives were probably saved when an immigration official spotted hair dangling from the undercarriage.

Zheng and Wang were among the few to be caught. Nearly half of 1,494 refugee claims made last year by Chinese nationals were abandoned after they disappeared, likely into the United States. "They go out the front door and into the U.S.," said Don Gracey, a Toronto immigration consultant who helped prepare a report on immigration for the Senate early this year. "Or they're taken into downtown Toronto or Montreal and given over to restaurant owners or brothels."

It is, of course, not only the Chinese who use the refugee system to get into the country. In July, police in Ontario charged 59 people who brought dozens of women to the province. The accused had advertised in Hungary, Mexico, Thailand and China for people to work as dancers in strip clubs. Police say the organizers told the victims to get rid of all personal documents before landing at Pearson International Airport, where they claimed refugee status.

But by far most would-be refugees simply appear at Canadian entry points along the 49th parallel. "They come to the border asking for asylum," says Richard Saint-Louis, a Montreal-based adviser to Immigration Canada. "They could be from Algeria, Sri Lanka or many other countries. A lot of them say they could claim refugee status in the United States, but they prefer the way Canada deals with refugees."

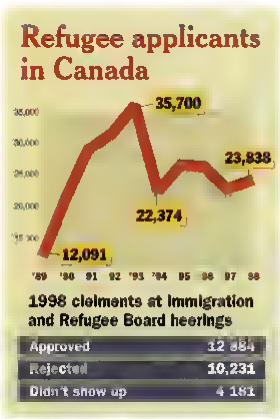
The protections Canada, and most other Western countries, extend to refugees stem from the UN Convention on the Status of Refugees that Canada signed in 1951. The treaty was created following the Second World War during which many countries, including Canada, turned away thousands of Jews. In 1985, the Supreme Court of Canada enshrined the rules for refugees when it ruled that everyone who reaches Canada has the right to make an immigration case and is fully protected by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Still, the Reform party's Benoit argues that few countries appear to have interpreted the UN convention as broadly as Canada. For example, female refugees entering Canada can claim gender persecution (such as China's one-child policy) or homosexuals can argue that they are being threatened in their home countries because of their sexual orientation. By comparison, France restricts its definition of refugee to someone fleeing state-sponsored violence.

The United States and Australia have also faced waves of illegals (140 suspected illegal immigrants from Iraq reached Australia's Christmas Island late last week), but their refugee systems are far more rigorous than Canada's. Australia regularly detains boat people and makes a quick assessment of their eligibility to lodge a refugee claim. About 80 per cent of the 540 boat people who arrived in 1997 and 1998 were returned to their country of origin (usually China). In most cases, the deportations took place within weeks of arrival in Australia. Canberra has also beefed up its airport immigration scrutiny and in July created a new criminal classification for anyone organizing the illegal entry of five or more people. Those convicted face a 20-year sentence and a fine of $220,000.

As last week's boarding of the freighter in the Pacific demonstrated, the United States tries to head off immigrants before they make their claim by intercepting them in international waters. Two teams of agents usually go aboard—one to investigate a possible crime, the other to interview and screen those aboard to determine if any have a credible refugee claim. If they don't, they are returned to their country of origin.

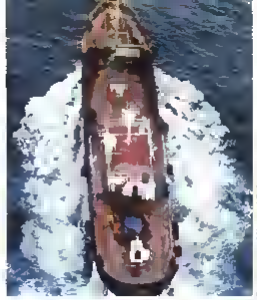
Washington put the emphasis on keeping illegals out of the country because once they get ashore they must be dealt with under regulations that are similar to those in Canada. They must be either detained or released pending a refugee hearing. Because of the possibility they may disappear, though, U.S. officials are more likely to keep in detention members of an organized group such as the Chinese in the Queen Charlottes. In such a case, said Blaine's Davis, "most likely they'd be held and we'd try to expedite the legal process and return them to China."



To Toronto Conservative Senator William Kelly, the flood of migrants into Canada is out of control. Kelly chaired the Senate committee that reported on illegal immigration in January. The committee's research revealed that government officials had no idea where many of the people who have declared refugee status end up. "The Immigration Act has got to be revised because the problem is much larger than anyone wants to admit," says Kelly. "The difficulty is every time someone tries to raise the issue, they are accused of being racist."

Kelly said the Canadian government could follow the stricter route taken by other countries, such as Australia. Benoit would go further. While not fully embracing the American policy of boarding ships in international waters, he says it is one of many options that should be examined.

While declining that option, Caplan does promise to take tougher action. Proposed changes to the Immigration Act could include beefing up interception of illegal migrants and stiffer penalties for smugglers, including allowing the government to seize their property. She also wants the hearing process—currently averaging 11 months—to be brought down to six months. "We don't know the status of those people," she says. "The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that anyone in Canada —and I would add that includes everyone in Canadian waters—can make a refugee claim."



Department of National Defence

The ship before capture, a cat-and-mouse chase

Still, the overall fairness of the system is a key point for immigrants who arrived in the conventional way. "I think Canada has made its refugee policy much too liberal, and the immigration policy much too right," says Wilfred Wan, chairman of Vancouver-based Success, a group helping immigrants to settle. "The system encourages illegal entries, and we are going to see more." If that happens, the debate will continue to rage as refugees arrive on Canada's rocky shores.

With John Geddes and Luke Fisher in Ottawa, Andrew Phillips in Washington, D'Arcy Jenish and Sheng Xue in Toronto, Ruth Abramson and Susan MacPhee in Vancouver, Paul Mooney in Beijing and Lindsey Arkley in Melbourne

Human smuggling is big business

Illegal immigration from China to North America is nothing new. But in recent years, it has become much bigger business. The going rate for making the trip is about $57,000, more if a person comes by air. The money is paid to smuggling syndicates that are now multinational, billion-dollar operations, stretching from China to Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Thailand, Central America and North America.

Organized crime groups, or triads, offer a no-nonsense, one-stop-shop approach to smuggling. Although the emigrants come from China—the bulk from Fujian province in the country's southeast—preparations for each trip are spread across Asia. Travel and other documents may be forged in Thailand, old cargo ships are rented or bought in Taiwan and Singapore, and provisions and refittings are undertaken in Hong Kong. The triads also handle bribes for local officials, and promise to bail out anyone caught at their destination.

Once arrangements are complete, blocks of so-called seating are handed out to different "snakeheads"—smugglers—in Fujian to fill. The one-month journey starts with a typical deposit of $15,000, with the rest payable in instalments after arrival. Migrants are taken to Fuqing, a small town on the coast of Fujian, where they board a ferry for the 20-minute ride to the island of Pingtan. There they take a small boat to the high seas just outside Taiwan waters and move to larger ships for the trip to North America, Australia or New Zealand.

Because the converted cargo ships are small, passengers are often crammed shoulder-to-shoulder below deck. On larger boats that carry hundreds of passengers, the lines for the makeshift toilets sometimes last two to three hours, with those too seasick to climb to the deck relieving themselves in the hold. Women who have made the trip say crew members sometimes demand sex.

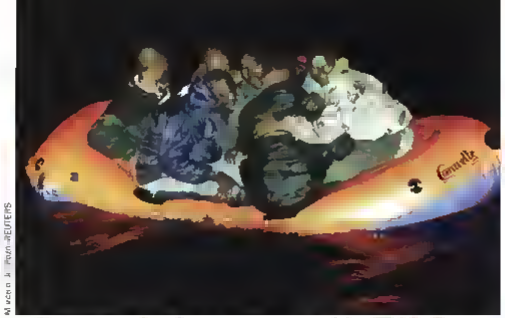
As the ships near U.S. or Canadian territorial waters, the smugglers normally discharge passengers onto smaller boats that ferry them ashore along the coastline. Accomplices on land help them reach popular destinations like New York City.

But if the trip is difficult, conditions when they arrive may not be much better, says Renald Gilbert, deputy program manager for immigration services at the Canadian Embassy in Beijing. "People pay to get on a boat and once they arrive they have to work to repay the smugglers," he says Gilbert. "But with interest on the loans, this can take five to 10 years, and the family here in China is held hostage if the person smuggled out has trouble paying for the trip. Smuggling is a tough world."

Gilbert says that the Canadian government is working with China to prevent the smuggling of human cargo. "The Chinese police are aware of the situation and try to fight it as much as they can, but they can't control the whole coast of Fujian," he says. "And they bring it back to us and say, 'As long as you accept them, there will be a constant flow of people.'"

Paul Mooney *in Beijing*

A global challenge



African would-be immigrants arrested off Spain: 'organized rackets'

By Barry Came in London

They appeared suddenly at dawn one day last week, materializing in the early morning mists blanketing the marshlands of northern Kent. Local police, summoned by alarmed residents of the county in southeastern England, first discovered a bedraggled band of 30 wandering along an isolated, hedge-rimmed lane, then encountered dozens of others in surrounding fields. Within hours, 116 people had been taken into custody, including 47 children, 16 of whom were unaccompanied by any adults. "They all claimed to be Albanian refugees from Kosovo," a spokesman for the Kent police force later recalled. "We are keeping an open mind about how they reached this country, but we are pretty certain that they were smuggled in, either by boat or in the back of cross-Channel freight lorries."

Affluent Europe faces a rising tide of migrants

The Kosovars themselves were not talking. But their unheralded arrival set off alarms in government offices in London. The refugees amounted to the largest single group of illegal immigrants ever smuggled into Britain. What is more, they are part of a swelling wave of refugees from unhappier lands that is washing up with increasing frequency upon European shores. In Britain, 46,000 people have claimed asylum in the past year. In June alone, a record 6,230 arrived, more than double the previous June. Only hours before police stumbled upon the Kosovars in Kent, Immigration Minister Barbara Roche had appeared on Czech television to threaten the reimposition of visas for Czech nationals in an effort to curb rising illegal immigration from the central European state consisting almost entirely of Roma, more commonly known as Gypsies.

Much the same is happening in affluent countries across Europe, all of which offer havens to refugees, although with varying rules. Late last year, Britain, Ireland, Finland and Norway restored visa requirements for Slovakians as a direct result of a huge influx of Slovakian Roma. Similarly, the Italian government has since the beginning of July been faced with a seaborne invasion across the Adriatic of more than 2,000 Roma from Kosovo and Albania. German authorities have mounted armed patrols and erected kilometres of barbed-wire fencing to police two key routes into the country—the road north from Prague and a highway running west from Poland—which are favoured by Roma and other displaced or disadvantaged peoples.

The traffic in illegal immigrants is, according to Ann Widdecombe, the British Conservative party's shadow home secretary, "an organized racket." Police in the English Channel ports of northern France have arrested 137 smugglers this year, almost all of them associated with Europe's extensive Albanian underworld. They operate by selling prospective asylum seekers in Britain a place in the back of one of the thousands of long-distance trucks that daily cross the Channel, either by ferry or by rail through the Chunnel. Prices vary, from as low as $120 to more than $1,000 per trip. Some drivers are bribed, some have their locks picked. But the problem has proved difficult to control. "When we arrest someone," complained Daniel Cadoux, prefect of police in Calais, "it is not long before another smuggler comes along to take his place. I am waging war with these people, but it is clear that the big bosses are in Paris and elsewhere."

One reason why migrant flows are so difficult to curtail is the sheer scale of the problem. According to the UN high commissioner for refugees, there were 21.5 million refugees in the world on Jan. 1, 1999—that is, one of out every 280 people on the planet. The UN classes another 30 million as displaced persons within their own countries, which means that more than 50 million people may have been forced to flee their homes.

Fearing more pressure on their borders, several European governments are bringing in further controls. British authorities, emulating recent German legislation, have drafted new rules that will deprive asylum seekers of automatic access to social security benefits, providing instead a less attractive system of food and clothing vouchers. After Germany passed its law last year, it managed to cut the number of asylum seekers by 75 per cent. The British clearly hope to discourage further unwelcome newcomers from appearing on Kent's rural byways. m

The world's displaced

The top five sources of refugees outside their own borders, as of Jan. 1

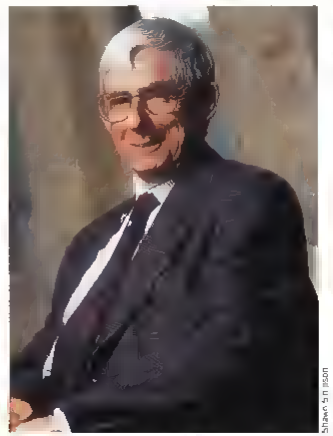
Country of origin	Number
Afghanistan	2,600,000
Iraq	631,000
Bosnia	597,000
Somalia	525,000
Burundi	517,000

Source: United Nations

A time for tough measures

Our policy plays into the hands of those who traffic in human lives

Abuse of the refugee policy is alienating ordinary Canadians, as well as turning Canada into a haven for criminals and terrorists, argues former ambassador WILLIAM BAUER who was a member of the Immigration and Refugee Board from 1990 until he resigned in frustration in 1994.



Bauer: the refugee board is rife with patronage

It is easy to feel compassion about the illegal Chinese migrants arriving on Canada's shores. The issue here, however, is not compassion, but criminality. A rusty freighterload of 131 migrants netted some fat-cat gangsters about $7 million—part of the $15 billion a year taken in by criminal gangs—the Colombian drug lords, the Chinese triads, the Tamil Tigers—who find human trafficking an extremely profitable adjunct to their drug smuggling, and a lot safer.

The issue is also the corruption of a noble concept—political asylum. The migrants will claim to be refugees because the criminal syndicates organizing their trips told them that this is how they can gain entry to Canada and the United States, receive money and accommodation, and obtain publicly paid legal assistance.

They can also slip across the U.S. border or go underground in Canada in the year before their refugee claims even come before the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB), which has a backlog of more than 20,000 claims. Last year, fewer than half of all Chinese claimants showed up for their hearings.

Some Canadians argue that the latest arrivals deserve sympathy and lenient treatment, because they are fleeing tough economic conditions. This is commendable, perhaps, but silly. Logically, the same should apply to the 100 million unemployed Chinese who are worse off than these migrants from Fujian province; in any event, they could have applied to a Canadian mission in China to immigrate to Canada. Others argue the migrants should be towed out to sea and sent home, but this ignores the legal constraints on the government. Both extremes reflect the confusion surrounding the subjects of asylum and immigration.

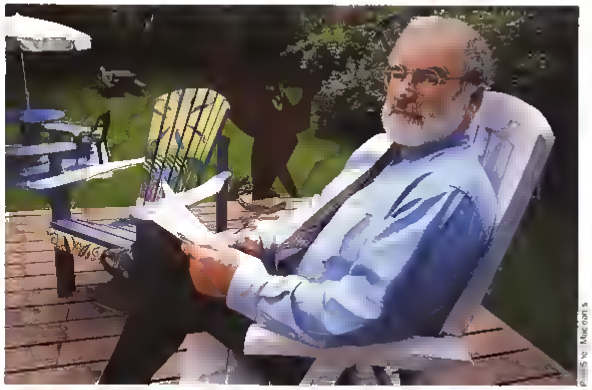
Unlike asylum, immigration is not a fundamental human right, although it is a traditional and essential policy of many countries, including Canada. Most people accept that Canada benefits from sensible and controlled immigration. Fake refugees, however, are using political asylum to achieve their objectives without meeting the criteria set out in Canadian law. The results of this large-scale corruption are serious. International trafficking in human beings provides huge returns for the international crime organizations, adding to their drug- and arms-smuggling income, and corrupting officials around the world. The claims of legitimate refugees and immigrants are delayed or rejected. The Canadian taxpayer is stuck with a bill of up to $500 million a year for people who have no claim to our protection.

Canada has become a haven for modern-day war criminals and terrorists who prey on their own ethnic groups and use Canada as a base for their killings here and abroad. Washington is under constant pressure to tighten up border controls to slow the flow of illegals from Canada—a step that would inconvenience millions of Canadians. Those who obtain Canadian citizenship by fraud will treat our laws with contempt.

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled in 1985 that everyone claiming refugee status is entitled to an oral hearing. The IRB was created to meet that need, but its procedures are pondetous and slow, and it is riddled with political patronage. Hearings are loaded in favour of claimants, who can (and do) commit perjury with impunity.

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms makes possible appeals and the resultant delays, but the process could be speeded up by detailed initial interviews by skilled and highly trained public servants to screen out the obvious fakes before they have time to develop, with their lawyers and co-conspirators, a fairy tale that meets the requirements of the refugee definition. It would also speed up the processing of genuine refugees. Deportation of fraudulent claimants should be certain and quick.

Canadians are a generous and compassionate people, and are rightly proud of their record of welcoming the persecuted of the world during the past 50 years. Their pride could, however, turn to bitterness if this cynical abuse of their good intentions is allowed to continue. m



Peter Mackinnon's

Abella: refugees make exemplary citizens—young, hardy, creative, courageous

'Let's get a grip'

Standing in line is not an option for many refugees

In a world overflowing with refugees, the handful of asylum-seekers from China dumped on British Columbia's coast are no threat to Canada, contends York University professor and author IRVING ABELLA, who is president of the Canadian Historical Association

So, once again, according to the talk shows and pundits, Canada is under siege. This time, the menace is several hundred miserable Chinese men and women who arrived, unannounced and apparently unwanted, on our Pacific coast.

A decade ago, it was 155 Sri Lankans, clinging desperately to lifeboats and 174 Sikhs in an ancient, leaking freighter landing on our Atlantic shores who prompted a frenzy of rhetoric culminating in a recall of Parliament to deal with an issue of "grave national importance."

Let's get a grip. We are not the "suckers" that some critics have claimed. In an average year, Canada accepts some 25,000 refugees. And in a nation whose population is approaching 30 million, that is hardly excessive, especially compared with some European countries that have absorbed many hundreds of thousands. In a world overflowing with millions of refugees, Canada's contribution is certainly not exorbitant.

The handful of asylum-seekers from China dumped unceremoniously along British Columbia's rugged shoreline are no more of a threat to Canada than the several hundred refugees from the Indian subcontinent were a decade ago. But they do highlight some problems.

Yes, it is clear that Canada's immigration and refugee laws need to be reviewed and new legislation introduced. But it is also clear that large numbers of Canadians have a very jaundiced view of our refugee policy. Canada is a peculiar nation. Peopled largely by immigrants, we seem adverse to immigration. All the historical evidence, including most public opinion polls done over the past 50 years, indicates that a majority of Canadians oppose a substantial increase in the number of people admitted into this country.

Indeed, for most of our history, Canada's immigration and refugee policy has been exclusionary and racist. We knew exactly what kind of people we wanted and how to keep out those we did not. It was not until the late 1960s that Canada finally abandoned her racial discriminatory policies and opened herself to such places as Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, the Middle East and Africa. For many Canadians, this nation is beginning to look like the United Nations. There are too many faces of colour on their city streets for their liking. And so, large numbers of Canadians have taken out their anger at our immigration policies on refugees.

What is different is that over the past few years, refugees have been choosing us, rather than us choosing them. For all of our history, it has been our immigration authorities who determined the types of people who were acceptable. Suddenly, we have discovered that the refugees are doing the selecting by arriving in little boats along our coasts, in planes at our airports or in buses at border crossings, demanding asylum.

But that ought not to surprise us. Of course many refugees abuse the system. In order to survive, they have to. For many, standing in line is no option.

Historically, refugees make exemplary citizens. They are exactly the type of immigrant Canada should want—young, hardy, creative, courageous. And as the most recent studies of the Sri Lankan and Sikh refugees, as well as the "boat people" who arrived from Southeast Asia in the 1980s, indicate, almost all of them are today gainfully employed, and some have set up businesses that employ other Canadians. The percentage of them on social assistance is lower than the national average.

Canada is a law-abiding nation, and until the laws are changed, everyone arriving here—no matter how they arrived—has a right to a hearing. If they can make the case that they are legitimate refugees with a well-founded fear of persecution in their homeland, they must be allowed to stay.

New Immigration Minister Elinor Caplan has it exactly right. Canada must balance its humanitarian commitment to real refugees against the challenge to our system by ruthless smuggling rings. Let's punish the smuggler, not the sanctuary-seeker. To do anything else would be un-Canadian. M

Border tensions simmer

Indian fighter jets shot down a Pakistani military aircraft, killing all 16 crew members, after it allegedly strayed into a border no-fly zone. Pakistani troops responded a day later by firing a surface-to-air missile at Indian aircraft flying near the border, reviving fears that the tit-for-tat attacks between the nuclear-armed rivals could lead to war.

Salt Lake bounces back

One person was killed, dozens were injured and at least 34 homes were destroyed when a rare tornado rampaged through downtown Salt Lake City without warning. But within 30 minutes, volunteers were briskly directing traffic and clearing debris, which officials attributed to the city's Mormons and their culture of preparedness.

Legalizing euthanasia

Opponents have branded a plan by the Dutch government to legalize mercy killing as a gross breach of medical ethics. Under the proposal, children as young as 12 could demand and receive euthanasia. The bill, expected to receive parliamentary approval next year, would be the only such law in the world since an Australian state measure was overturned in 1997.

Rethinking the origins of life

Scientists studying rocks uncovered at a site in northwestern Australia have discovered molecular fossils, which, they say, demonstrate that primitive forms of life existed 2.7 billion years ago, one billion years earlier than previously thought. The researchers found evidence of lipids, organic compounds produced by living creatures.

Closing the Mustang

The Mustang Ranch, Nevada's most famous bordello for more than 40 years, has closed its gates following a lengthy tax and fraud case involving founder Joe Conforte that left the establishment with a new owner—the U.S. government. The 24-hour complex of swimming pools, hot tubs, discos and private rooms, which employed 80 to 100 women, closed after a suitably wild and crowded final weekend.



Lionel Cironneau/AP

A celestial show for the millennium

Sunbathers in Nice, France, joined millions of people from Bombay to Newfoundland who watched a total eclipse of the sun, the last of the millennium. Pope John Paul and Iranian President Mohammad Khatami were among those covering their eyes to witness the event. As the moon passed between the sun and the Earth, day briefly resembled night, and people gasped and cheered.

A racist rampage in Los Angeles

Buford Furrow Jr. made no bones about why he went on a Los Angeles shooting rampage. According to a police official, the 37-year-old white supremacist from Washington state told them he was concerned about "the decline of the white race and wanted to send a message to America by killing Jews." Furrow was charged with five counts of attempted first-degree murder after he confessed to walking into a Jewish community centre in suburban Los Angeles and firing more than 70 rounds from a machine-gun, wounding a 68-year-old receptionist, a 16-year-old girl and three boys, two aged 6 and one, 5. "I cannot understand someone who has that kind of hate," said Alan Strepakoff, father of one of the victims. Furrow was also charged with murdering Joseph Ileto, a 39-year-old Filipino-American letter carrier who was shot on a quiet street about five kilometres from the first attack, one hour later. Eluding police, Furrow took a taxi to Las Vegas, then turned himself in. Officials said he had planned to attack three major Jewish sites, including the Simon Wiesenthal Center, but found security too tight.

Yeltsin sacks another prime minister

Russian President Boris Yeltsin fired his fourth prime minister in 17 months, Sergei Stepashin, and replaced him with political novice Vladimir Putin, a Soviet-era KGB spy and more recently head of Russia's Federal Security Service. Yeltsin, whose term expires next year, anointed Putin as his heir apparent. "It's hard to explain madness," remarked Boris Nemtsov, a former deputy prime minister. By week's end, Putin faced his first crisis: suppressing an uprising by Chechen-led Islamic rebels in the southern region of Dagestan.

A Poisoned Inquiry

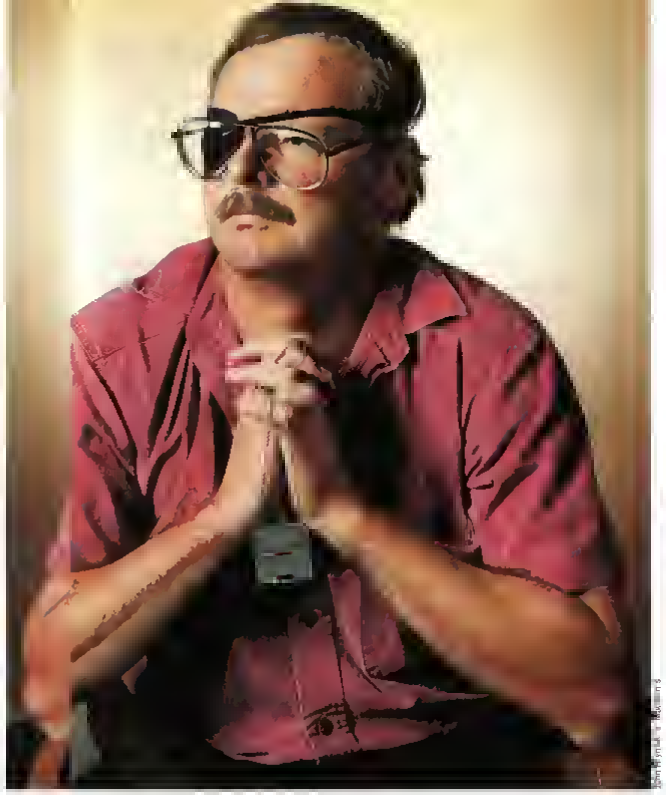
Bizarre game or coverup? Did Canadian peacekeepers really poison their superiors?

By John Geddes and John Nicol

It's easy to see why Matt Stopford was popular with his fellow soldiers during his army years. Although his right eye is covered by a patch these days—the most obvious sign of the myriad health problems that have plagued him since his stint in 1993 as a peacekeeper in Croatia—his good left one still creases with laughter. Stopford even finds humour in last week's revelation that military investigators believe he and another veteran might have been systematically poisoned by fellow soldiers. The investigators theorize that battery acid was put in Stopford's food and naphtha gas was regularly slipped into both men's coffee when they were serving in Croatia, a tour of duty that included a dangerous stint in an infamous zone called the Medak Pocket. Already, Stopford's army buddies kid him. "This will be the joke on me forever now," he chuckled in an interview with *Maclean's*. "Somebody will be saying, 'Here, Matt, have a Medak coffee."

Stopford insists the poisoning theory is ludicrous. But Brig.-Gen. Patricia Samson, the armed forces' top police officer, says it is based on information her investigators gathered from two credible sources. They were questioned as part of an ongoing probe into the destruction of certain medical files of peacekeepers who fell ill after serving in Croatia and who may have been exposed to toxic substances there. Samson says she took the unusual step of passing the information on to the two possible poisoning victims before the investigation was completed out of concern for their health and safety. "I was caught in an extraordinary ethical and moral dilemma," she told an impromptu news conference, called only after Stopford went public to disclose this latest bizarre turn in the investigation.

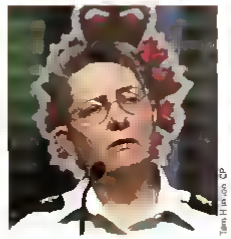
The swirl of media attention that followed was nothing new for Stopford, 37, who lives in Peterborough, Ont. He has emerged as the unofficial leader of a loose network of active and retired soldiers who believe they suffer ill health—from aching joints to failing eyesight—as a result of something they ate, drank or breathed in Croatia. But the second supposed target of poisoning, Bill Nickson, 44, of Saint John, N.B., was reticent about speaking out, in part because he has faith in the inquiry. Nickson said he felt compelled to talk to *Maclean's* only out of concern that anyone might think the poisoning story suggests there was bad blood among the 36 soldiers in his platoon. Nickson was a master corporal and Stopford the noncommissioned officer in the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry's Delta Company in Croatia. "When one of our checkpoints took fire, the rest of the platoon was out of barracks, in a platoon carrier, armed to the teeth and backing them up in a minute," Nickson remembers with pride. "There were no cowards in that platoon."



The unit's cohesion was tested in battle conditions rarely experienced by peacekeepers. It landed in the war-ravaged remains of Yugoslavia in the spring of 1993, squeezed between Croatian and Serbian forces who were still lashing out at each other in their bitter ethnic war. Near a strategically important bridge by the town of Maslenica, the platoon hunkered down in an old school and some partly destroyed houses. "The Serbs had an artillery battery behind us," Nickson says. "It was interesting to watch round after round go overhead and land at the bridge. Our purpose was to move in and establish a ceasefire line, once a line had been agreed to."

Even tougher was the mission when the platoon was sent northeast to the area known as the Medak Pocket. "At that point, the Croatians there were burning villages and killing everyone," Stopford recalls. "Everything was dead across the fields, thousands of sheep and cattle, and there were bodies some places, and every standing structure was on fire, cars were on fire. We pushed the Croatian army back, and then we had to clean up."





Canadians on duty in Croatia (left), a determined Stopford (above). Samson 'caught in an extraordinary ethical and moral dilemma,' Samson says she passed the information on to the two possible poisoning victims before the investigation was completed

Nearly six years later, pinpointing what, if anything, in those grim conditions left peacekeepers chronically sick is a tall order. Stopford and some other ex-soldiers—he says 56 others who are sick have contacted him—trace their health problems to the polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs, spilled from smashed electrical transformers, and to the bauxite-laden red soil they shovelled into sandbags to make bunkers. A doctor's note warning about exposure to those substances was put into the medical files of as many as 1,000 peacekeepers who served in Croatia—then mysteriously removed. The Reform party learned about the missing notes through an access-to-information request and exposed the tampering. That was when Defence Minister Art Eggleton and Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Maurice Baril responded with an inquiry.

Finding out who ordered the cleansing of the files was to have been the inquiry's first order of business. The board itself, however, soon become mired in controversy. Its head, Col. Howard Marsh, turned out to have been among the officers who did not take decisive action when he was told about the problem back in May, 1998. Faced with media

charges that he would have to investigate his own possible negligence, Marsh initially said that was not a problem, then suddenly stepped aside last week. He was replaced by air force Col. Joe Sharpe.

But the transition was not that simple. Eggleton and Baril also decided to split the inquiry's mandate. Sharpe is now mainly to look into what possible health threats peacekeepers were exposed to in Croatia. A separate team led by former assistant RCMP commissioner Lowell Thomas will investigate the related—and more politically volatile—issue of how the defence department handled the matter back home. Last week, ex-corporal Andrew Beckett, who had also served in Croatia, acknowledged shredding the medical files at the army's Calgary medical centre. He said he was acting on orders from Warrant Officer Danny Noyes, who ran the centre and who said he had his instructions from higher up.

Detailed terms of reference for the revamped inquiries are expected to come out this week. But one thing is already clear: Sharpe and Thomas will be ordered to stay out of the way of Insp. Russ Grabbe, an RCMP officer on loan to military police who is investigating whether a crime was committed when the soldiers' medical files were altered. "Insp. Grabbe will do what he has to do and has precedence over all the others," says armed forces' spokesman Lt.-Col. Jacques Tremblay.

Veterans of the Croatian mission seem suspicious of all three inquiries

So far, veterans of the Croatian peacekeeping mission seem suspicious of all three investigations. Some, like Stopford, are publicly calling for an inquiry that is independent from the military hierarchy. Still, Stopford had been willing to pass on all the information he has gathered to retired roaster warrant officer Mike Spellen, a plainspoken Winnipegger named by Baril to sit on the board of inquiry as a representative of soldiers who served in Croatia. But in another strange twist, Stopford says he was instructed last week by an officer not to contact Spellen. "I wanted to give him names and phone numbers of sick soldiers," Stopford says bitterly. "But I guess the army doesn't want that, so I'm not allowed to talk to him until after the inquiry and he's not allowed to talk to me." Lt.-Col. Tremblay confirmed that such dialogue would not be welcomed. "Whenever the board does contact people it will be in a formal way," he said, "in writing."

Distrust of the way the armed forces is handling the investigation only deepened with the improbable-sounding poisoned coffee tale. Army cooks who dished up meals in Croatia scoffed at the notion that anyone could have poisoned just two soldiers drinking from the same coffee pot and eating the same food as all the rest. Doctors have also suggested that naphtha is a very aromatic gas and would have been detected, especially when heated in a cup of coffee. Stopford charges that the whole story seems concocted to divert attention from the possible coverup of a serious health risk. That allegation sounds extreme—but he is not alone in levelling it. "What I think is that they're blowing smoke so it takes everybody's eye off the real issues, destruction of documents and possible exposure to contaminants," says retired warrant officer Ed Dagenais, who was in charge of a platoon that often crossed paths with Stopford's in Croatia. Dagenais is among those worried about his health. he has experienced an unexplained weight loss, dropping from 168 lb. to 148 lb. since his return from duty. As for the chances that the crisscrossing investigations will provide answers, he falls in with the skeptics: "I've been in the army long enough to know the army can't investigate itself. We've seen that with the Somalia investigation."



Scott Dunlop/Hali fax Daily News

Warrant Officer Noyes ordered the controversial files shredded — but, he says, only on the direction of senior officers

Stopford also knows the army well—or at least thought he did. Before Croatia, he served on two rotations as a peacekeeper in Cyprus, and spent five happy years with Canada's troops in Germany. His reputation was solid: a guy you could trust, a little messy (he was nicknamed Pig Pen, also Meathead) but good for a laugh in a tight spot. He was the classic career soldier, having joined the army at 17, fulfilling a dream he had growing up in Kincardine, Ont., on Lake Huron.

Now, though, the good days seem a long time ago. Stopford recounts his deterioration after coming home from Croatia: first a lung infection, then night sweats, finally debilitating joint pain and failing sight in his right eye. During this litany, his face falls slack. His disability pension from the department of veterans affairs has finally been granted, he says, as a result of the turmoil of recent weeks. And only last week, he adds, after years of pleading for help, he was finally told by armed forces officers that they are searching for appropriate specialists to examine him. "They haven't done the right thing," he mutters, his voice dropping as though he is talking to himself. "They are going to before I'm done." For jovial Matt Stopford, this is no joke. m

Juggling priorities

The premier's wish list plays into Ottawa's hands

Leave it to the historic elegance of Quebec City to lend even the premiers' conference, that annual group gripe about Ottawa, the ebullience of a street party. As the premiers arrived for cocktails at City Hall one early evening last week—after eight hours of intense closed-door meetings—strolling tourists paused to form a cheerful crowd. Across the narrow street, three open-air performers in clown costumes respectfully took a break. But before the last few premiers could straggle up, one performer grew tired of waiting and lit his torches. The throng swivelled: camcorders that had just captured the arrival of the premiers, who had spent the day trying to keep a dizzying array of spending and tax proposals in the air, now fixed on a real fire juggler, Ti'Guy L'hallucinant.

The Hallucinator finished his show without being burned. The same cannot be said for the premiers. As the meetings ended, they were forced on the defensive for throwing about a shopping list of costly demands. Even some premiers admitted their discussions at times degenerated into hairsplitting. Should they demand Ottawa provide "substantial" or "sustainable" tax cuts? ("Sustainable" won out in the final communiqué.) "We went through six drafts," moaned Alberta's Ralph Klein later. "It got a little tiresome." No doubt. Yet these sessions were far from trivial. The premiers were grappling with the big political question of the day: how should the swelling federal surplus, now projected by the Royal Bank of Canada to reach $25.9 billion by 2004-2005, be split?

The premiers' answer: into many pieces. Instead of following the successful example of last year's get-together in Saskatoon—where an unambiguous plea to make health care the country's top priority pushed Ottawa to restore $2.5 billion in annual payments to medicare—this year they failed to find a sharp focus. The premiers want Ottawa to cough up the rest of the transfer payments cut during the first-term deficit fight—roughly $3.7 billion a year—*and* they want unspecified millions more to aid Prairie farmers, pave highways and subsidize shipbuilders. On top of everything was the call for cuts to personal income tax and unemployment insurance premiums. "To have 20 priorities is to have no priorities," sniffed federal Finance Minister Paul Martin from Ottawa.

The premiers' long wish list left them exposed to such sniping. Also to the jibe that the compromises struck between tax and spending options sound eerily like what Prime Minister Jean Chrétien likes to call his "balanced approach" to the revenue surplus. Yet the premiers were hardly signing on in advance to new federal spending. In fact, underlying much of the private discussion in Quebec City was a growing concern about what Ottawa's renewed fiscal strength might mean for federalism's balance of power. So when Ontario Premier Mike Harris pressed his peers—without great success—to demand big federal tax cuts, it represented more than a neoconservative desire to reclaim money for taxpayers. It was also a provincial kingpin's instinct to limit Ottawa's revenue flow.

Anxiety about an ascendant Ottawa was undisguised in the premiers' spending prescriptions. Noting the Chrétien government's growing interest in a so-called children's agenda, for federal spending on preschool care and education, they quickly claimed the turf as their own. The premier chairing the meetings may have had the most interest in curbing Ottawa's clout. As host, Lucien Bouchard's constructive role had Newfoundland's Brian Tobin calling him Captain Canada. But for his own voters, the separatist premier's explanation went beyond joking. "Whatever happens," he said pointedly, "Quebec will always have to sit down with the provinces." With another referendum as early as next year, Bouchard had reason to adopt a conciliatory tone. His tightrope walk from his persona as sovereigntist champion to that of constructive premier may have been the smoothest of the street performances on display in the old walled city.



Jennifer Lynn Dyers - Photographer for Maclean's

Harris, New Brunswick's Bernard Lord (right) in historic Quebec balancing act

John Geddes *in Quebec City*

Clark's date with destiny

An embattled premier twists in the wind of a fierce courtroom drama

By Jennifer Hunter

Almost six months ago, on a dark March evening, the RCMP showed up at British Columbia Premier Glen Clark's modest east-end Vancouver house armed with a search warrant. The dramatic raid—aired on the evening news after a BCTV reporter was tipped to the story—has never been fully explained because the information used to obtain the search warrant was sealed by the courts. Since then, there has been constant legal wrangling by news organizations to make the documents public, as is normally done. So far, they haven't succeeded, but the secrecy has served to further cloud the reputation of an embattled premier and leave him twisting in the wind of an unusual courtroom drama.

Last Friday in court, it was revealed for the first time that the police used wiretap evidence as part of the material to obtain the warrant to search Clark's home. And while the premier has always stated he is "desperate to get all of it cleared up", his lawyer, David Gibbons, is arguing strenuously against publishing the information in the documents. "Innocent people could be irreparably damaged the moment this subject matter is published," he told Patrick Dohm, associate chief justice of the B.C. Supreme Court, who reserved his decision until this week. He also wants the warrant on Clark's home quashed entirely—and is applying to Dohm, the same judge who issued it, to argue it was "an unlawful search."

Since the early 1980s, the Supreme Court of Canada has held that the public has the right to inspect the information behind search warrants and other police intrusions. But in the spring of 1997, Parliament changed the rules slightly to give judges more discretion to withhold this information if they felt justice would not be served.

The legal contretemps over the search warrants only adds more fuel to the fierce fire already burning under Clark's government. Key ministers have resigned in protest over his leadership, there is controversy over excessive spending, and the NDP has a paltry 16-per-cent approval rating. Fighting publication of the warrant so strongly has led many British Columbians to believe he has something to hide.



The premier and an aide in Quebec City last week: he says he wants the truth out, but his lawyer is fighting to quash the search warrant used on Clark's home

The RCMP searched Clark's house, police said, in connection with the province's decision to grant a conditional licence for a charity casino to a friend and neighbour of the premier's, 34-year-old Dimitrios Pilarinos. Clark maintains stoutly he is innocent of any wrongdoing. But since no one has been charged, speculation is that Gibbons' move to have the warrants quashed entirely is as much political as it is legal. "It looks bad to have been someone who was searched," explains Dan Burnett, lawyer for BCTV, CBC and CKNW radio. "You erase the stigma if it looks like you were searched unjustly."

Guessing about the motives for a search warrant on Clark's home—and for 13 other locations that included government offices, private homes and cars—has become something of a parlour game among British Columbia's political set, with some NDP supporters even suggesting it was instigated by a cabal of Liberals, the RCMP and the media. Initially, the Crown argued the search warrant information could not be made public because it would hinder an investigation. Then, Dohm allowed edited versions to be released to a select group of lawyers. But they were forbidden to discuss the material with their clients, which proved a hardship.

In response, Dohm lifted the veil further by allowing the lawyers and their clients to read the unedited documents. The list includes Clark, his legal team and at least 20 editors and writers whose organizations are pushing for the information's release. "It's been very frustrating not being able to get at the contents of what are normally considered public documents," says Patricia Graham, senior editor at *The Vancouver Sun*. "It keeps the premier under a cloud, the RCMP under a cloud and the media under a cloud."

Dohm warned the readers that they could not share the information with anyone or publish anything. In newsrooms across Vancouver, an invisible wall was erected between those who had read the documents and those who hadn't. Editors who had seen the material could not discuss it with reporters. Journalists who have looked at the search warrant material include those from VTV, Global television, the *National Post*, *The Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, *The Province* and The Canadian Press. "Only two people in our newsroom have had access to the information," says John Daly, the BCTV reportet who broke the news of the RCMP raid on Clark's home. "I've deliberately not wanted to see anything. I don't want to have my hands tied reporting on this story."



Nick Procaylo/CP



Clark's east-end residence, an angry premier in the window as police scoured the premises in March. will the public ever be told the reasons behind the raid?

What the public does know: last year, Clark's friend Pilarinos applied for a charity casino licence at the North Burnaby Inn in tandem with Steve Ng, who owns the hotel, as well as a strip club and an Internet gambling company. While the police were investigating the granting of a provisional casino licence to the two men, they were also looking into allegations of an illegal gambling club at the North Burnaby Inn. (Pilarinos was eventually charged with being found in an illegal gaming house there.)

The police were tipped off about the case in August, 1998, by an employee in Liberal Leader Gordon Campbell's constituency office who had been approached by an anonymous informer. The informant was Dimitris Vrahnos, a federal government employee and member of Vancouver's Greek community, who police finally tracked down in February. Vrahnos had also sent *The Vancouver Sun* a three-page memo in January detailing his allegations. This was sent on to the Gaming Audit and Investigation Office, which examines the background of casino licence applicants, and to the RCMP.

After a police raid on the North Burnaby Inn and his home, Clark described Pilarinos as "a neighbour of mine, we see each other occasionally, our children attend the same school and they play together." Pilarinos, Clark later acknowledged, built a deck on the back of Clark's house. Soon it came to light that not only had Pilarinos worked on Clark's residence, he had vacationed at the Clark family cabin in the Okanagan and had constructed a deck there as well.

Clark's lawyer, Gibbons, vehemently stated the premier was not involved in any of the decision-making on the North Burnaby Inn charity casino licence and a government memo was distributed to the media to show Clark had kept himself at arm's length. But more than a few eyebrows were raised when it was shown that the cabinet had OK'd the provisional licence when the Burnaby city council had vigorously opposed it and when the gaming audit office had not yet given its stamp of approval.

For British Columbians, who have seen two of their last three premiers—Bill Vander Zalm and Mike Harcourt—resign in the teeth of scandals, the casino licence controversy has a wearying sense of déjà vu. Even if Clark manages to succeed in keeping the search warrant material out of the public spotlight, it won't be the end of the story. This fall, British Columbia's conflict of interest commissioner will begin a hearing to see if the premier did, in fact, keep an arm's length distance from the Pilarinos' casino application. Indeed, it is probably only a matter of time before the information behind the search warrants sees the light of day.

The monumental mayor

By Anthony Wilson-Smith



Drapeau, with wife Marie-Claire, leaving the mayor's job in 1986: rare emotion

Jean Drapeau lived by extremes. The man who as Montreal mayor for 29 years routinely travelled the world didn't leave Quebec for the first time until age 36, when he went to New Brunswick. The politician who comfortably entertained royalty, presidents and prime ministers lived, with wife Marie-Claire, in a modest brick bungalow in Montreal's working-class Rosemont district, which he bought with a $14,000 loan from his father in 1952. While opponents railed against the spending excesses of his government, Drapeau lived an ascetic life. His seven-day, 100-hour workweeks began with one of two breakfast choices: a cup of boiling water with lemon, or black coffee, taken at his desk at about 5:30 a.m. He was an incurable pack rat—right up until his death last week at 83 of undisclosed causes—and the private office he kept on Sherbrooke Street East was crammed with "every letter, medal, lighter, souvenir and knickknack he ever received," said Senator John Lynch-Staunton, an old friend and ally.

That frugal lifestyle was in sharp contrast to Drapeau's panoramic dreams and accomplishments. They range from construction of Montreal's unique Metro subway to the cultural centre Place des Arts to Expo 67, the world's fair, to the key role he played in bringing major league baseball to his city. For his achievements, "he will be remembered as the greatest mayor in Montreal's history—and one of Canada's greatest politicians," said Roger Landry, publisher of the daily *La Presse*.

That will be the case despite a large blot on Drapeau's record: the debt-ridden 1976 Summer Olympic Games. Originally budgeted at $310 million, costs ran $1 billion over budget—and the city is still paying the bills for the controversial stadium. Drapeau, before the Games, made his infamous crack that "the Olympics can no more have a deficit than a man can have a baby." After, he was unrepentant—and so are his defenders. Says Landry: "He dreamed of glory for the city, not himself."

An autocrat with the common touch, Drapeau leaves his mark on the city he pushed onto the world stage

Although he won eight of nine elections—most by massive majorities—in a city known for its flamboyance, Drapeau's allure was not always apparent. In person, his most notable characteristics were his high, querulous voice, egg-shaped head, and dark eyes magnified by thick glasses. Despite his passion for the Olympics, he hated exercise and games: he played tennis once as a child, was hit in the eye with the ball, and quit. His English was fluent but heavily accented, while his French reflected his working-class roots. During rare interviews he gave to journalists, he sidestepped questions, or gave maddeningly circuitous responses.

But on the stump, Drapeau was riveting. He had the ability to share his vision with listeners, to convince with his overwhelming belief in whatever he was promoting. Once, Drapeau's biographer, journalist Brian McKenna, asked his view of Lord Acton's maxim that power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. "That's true," responded Drapeau. "But not absolutely true." In a 1986 *Maclean's* interview, he explained his philosophy simply: "The people and I, we understand each other." He answered all the thousands of letters he received annually. On Sundays, he always drove through his city, Wagner-ans blaring on his limousine tape deck, to inspect problems cited by constituents. Says Gerry Snyder, a longtime political ally: "You couldn't con him: he knew the issues firsthand."

Despite his stern image, Drapeau loved gossip and bawdy, sometimes silly jokes. Because of that he became close friends with a vocal critic, opposition councillor and gadfly Nick Auf der Maur. CBC television host Brian Stewart recalls going with Auf der Maur to visit Drapeau about 15 years ago. They arrived first, and Auf der Maur hid behind an office partition. When Drapeau stepped into the room, Auf der Maur leapt out and shouted "Boo!" Stewart was mortified while Drapeau and Auf der Maur collapsed with laughter.

Drapeau knew how to make a splash. During the 1967 world's fair, Ed Sullivan, host of the wildly popular television show that bore his name, had Drapeau on twice as a guest to plug Expo, and called him "the greatest mayor." That all came about because Drapeau had read a newspaper column by Sullivan that briefly praised Montreal. Drapeau, who never watched the show, wrote Sullivan a gushing note, which led to the invitations.

Born in 1916, Drapeau attended law school at the Université de Montréal. After dabbling with anti-conscription groups during the war—and running unsuccessfully for federal and provincial office—he rose to fame in the early 1950s as the lead lawyer in an inquiry that exposed the links between organized crime and the Montreal police. That led a group of citizens to draft him for a successful mayoralty run in 1954. Drapeau was approached many times later by many different parties to run at other levels, but always refused. "More than anything," said Lynch-Staunton, "he was a Montrealer."

A proud federalist, Drapeau made one of his last appearances in October, 1995, via video at a pro-Canada rally before the referendum. His was also the most effective reply to Charles de Gaulle's provocative use of the separatist slogan "Vive le Québec libre" during a 1967 visit. With passion in his voice, Drapeau told the visiting French president that Quebecers' identities were forged in the Canadian cauldron, not in that of Mother France.

Drapeau's voice broke when he announced retirement plans in 1986—one of the few times he showed emotion. Prime minister Brian Mulroney made him ambassador to UNESCO in Paris, but he otherwise stayed out of the public eye. Now, the debate begins over how to remember him. But, says McKenna, in the city he controlled for so long, a formal memorial may not be necessary because "Montreal as it exists today is the real monument to the man." Even Drapeau could dream of no greater tribute. ■





Doug Ball/CP



Roger Varley/CP

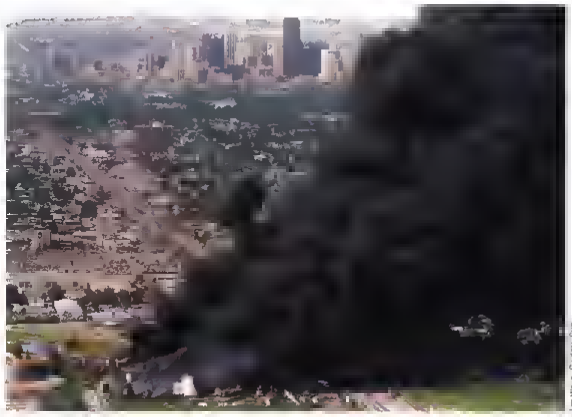


Meeting the press near the midpoint of his 29-year reign; sharing a laugh with premier René Lévesque (top right); superimposed on his beloved Expo 67; entertaining the Queen Mother; and pronouncing on a biological feat: always quotable, always yearning for more



Allan/Montreal Gazette

"The Olympics can no more have a deficit than a man have a baby."



Jim Wells, Calgary Sun

Angry fallout from an oil plant explosion

A 60-year-old recycling plant in southeast Calgary blew up in a series of spectacular fireballs, blanketing the city with a sulphurous grease that soiled plants, birds and backyards. Two workers were killed and 2,000 residents temporarily evacuated. Still unanswered: what caused the blast, how safe was the plant, and who cleans up a neighbourhood doused with oil and jet fuel?

More musical chairs in Ottawa

Just a week after rearranging his cabinet, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien seems intent on keeping the body politic in motion. First off was the appointment of three new Liberal Senators, including long-serving Montreal MP Sheila Finestone. Then on Friday, Newfoundland Tory Bill Matthews announced he will cross the floor to sit as a Grit. Just elected to Parliament in 1997, Matthews had a 14-year career in the Newfoundland House of Assembly, including four as a provincial minister. He is switching parties, he said, on the direct invitation of the Prime Minister. As for the Senate appointments—there are still five vacancies—last week's continue the Chrétien pattern of hedging his bets. Two of the appointees, Finestone at 72, and PEI Liberal Melvin Perry at 73, are just a few years away from mandatory retirement at 75. Newfoundland lawyer George Furey, brother of a provincial cabinet minister and one of those charged with breaching Quebec's referendum law by flying in federalists to the giant rally just days before the 1995 vote, is a mere 51. Finestone's elevation leaves Pierre Trudeau's old Mount Royal seat up for grabs—promising more high-profile bump and grind.

Lessons learned from a cultural explosion

Canadian National is asking British Columbia native bands for an inventory of sacred sites after inadvertently blowing up a time-honoured boulder in the Fraser Canyon. The ancient rock, shaped like a pointing finger, was one of about 100 sacred symbols of the Sto-Lo Nation, felt to be the embodiment of ancestors. CN work crews, clearing the track of a mud slide that had derailed a freight train, were nervous about the huge rock overhanging the canyon and blew it to smithereens.

Canada sues Manitoba

In an unusual twist on federal-provincial diplomacy, Ottawa is suing Manitoba for $10 million in civil court. Believed to be a first for Canadian federalism—the action was taken after fruitless negotiations—the suit claims costs incurred for repeated sandbagging and repair work on three native reserves flooded from the overflow of two provincial dams.

The polluting province

Despite a reduction in air and water emissions from previous years, Ontario has become the second-worst polluter among Canadian provinces and U.S. states, trailing only Texas, according to a list compiled under the North American Free Trade Agreement. Ontario slipped from its third-place ranking (ahead of Louisiana) in two previous reports. Quebec, the next-largest Canadian polluter, ranks 20th.

Humiliated vote-riggers

Two key aides to Manitoba Premier Gary Filmon will not be charged with vote-rigging, though a special prosecutor says there is a good case against them. The reason: the prosecutor says the two have been humiliated enough by a public inquiry. Filmon agrees and says, with an election expected soon, voters will pass their own judgment.

Cuban defectors

With the Pan-Am Games over, Cuba now says that 13 members of its delegation defected to Canadian authorities in Winnipeg and are seeking refugee status. The list includes 11 athletes, a coach and a journalist. During the 17-day games, Ottawa reported that six people had sought asylum here.

Bluenose swamped

Its illustrious namesake foundered ingloriously on a Caribbean reef 53 years ago; the Bluenose II now finds itself moored in a sea of raw sewage and adrift in federal-provincial debate. The extent—and smell—of the refuse is such that city officials in Lunenburg, N.S., say they cannot meet their obligations as a United Nations World Heritage site. Their problem is getting Ottawa to help pay for a sewage system.

A death in the family

'A brilliant spotter of talent,' Arthur Irwin was an editor, diplomat and nationalist

By Carl Mollins



Victoria Times-Colonist

Irwin, he was the motivating force at Maclean's

A death is always hard on the family, regardless of its timing. So it was in the passing on Aug. 9 at his Victoria home, albeit at the rich old age of 101, of Arthur Irwin, the influential journalist and diplomat and Canadian nationalist—hard for his wife of almost 49 years, poet and painter P.K. Page, for his son and two daughters of an earlier marriage that left him a widower, for his 14 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. And so it was also, if only by long remembrance or reputation, in a coast-to-coast family of past and present members and readers of *Maclean's*, the magazine he helped nourish throughout the second quarter of this century in ways that echo still in its pages and in its purpose.

William Arthur Irwin—Art to those who breached his careful tidiness and manner to reach the caring humanist within—was a Methodist preacher's kid, which may have underpinned both his humanity and his perfectionist impulses as an editorial overseer at *Maclean's* from early 1926, first as associate editor, then managing editor and finally, from 1945 to 1950, as editor in chief. His pencilled editing queries and comments on copy became legendary expressions of his insistence on clarity and honesty. "A confirmed nationalist, he saw his task as 'interpreting Canada to Canadians,' " recalled one of his many famous recruits, Pierre Berton, who has described Irwin as "a tough editor, and a brilliant spotter of talent who believed in careful research [and] attracted and helped train an entire generation of young writers."

Born in the small-town southern Ontario community of Ayr, a sometime railway construction worker in his youth, Irwin interrupted his university studies in Winnipeg—later completed in Toronto—by going to Europe as an artilleryman during the First World War, an experience he later credited with stimulating his Canadianism. After postwar graduation, he worked for stints on predecessors of *The Globe and Mail*—as a reporter on *The Mail and Empire*, then as a writer of editorials on *The Globe*, which he quit late in 1925 in a dispute over his critical treatment of business interests behind the Conservative party. At age 27, he took up a *Maclean's* job offer that led to his appointment on April 1, 1926, as second in editorial command to a new chief editor, H. Napier Moore.

When Moore and Irwin took over, *Maclean's* was basking in its progress from its start in 1905 as a monthly culling of material from British and American publications into a twice-monthly journal written largely by and for Canadians. Two weeks before announcing the new appointments, outgoing editor Vernon McKenzie noted in the magazine that all but a few of its hundreds of features in the previous year were Canadian and observed: "The fundamental Canadianism of MacLean's [as it was then spelled] is one of the rock-bottom foundations upon which Canada's National Periodical has been established."

Still, in building on that foundation, Irwin found himself in conflict with the English-born Moore. "We used to fight over everything," Irwin recalled in a 1984 *Maclean's* interview. Nevertheless, Berton says, "Irwin quickly became the magazine's motivating force, long before he assumed the editor's chair."

After five years in the top *Maclean's* seat, Irwin left to reorganize the National Film Board in the wake of Cold War accusations that it was infested with communists (Irwin found faint evidence of that) and went on to serve as Canada's top envoy to Australia, Brazil, Mexico and Guatemala before settling in the British Columbia capital, where, from 1964 to 1971, he was publisher of the Victoria *Daily Times*. But his greatest gift, according to those who knew him at *Maclean's*, was to push the magazine towards feeling, as Irwin recruit June Callwood said in a 1995 recollection, "like the beating heart of the country."



Double Whammy

The oilpatch rejoices, but consumers are facing steeper prices for natural gas and gasoline

By Brian Bergman

If there's a certain bounce in the step of Calgary's oil and gas barons these days, it's with good reason. After enduring a free fall that sent crude oil prices tumbling to a low of $10.72 (U.S.) per barrel late last year, the industry breathed a collective sigh of relief as the price climbed back up in recent months to a healthy $21 per barrel. Better yet, natural gas prices, which remained steady even during the oil slump, have suddenly taken flight. The one-two punch in energy prices has the oilpatch abuzz with talk of a vigorous—and potentially lucrative—winter drilling season. "It's quite unusual to have oil and gas prices moving up at the same time," says Peter Linder, a senior oil and gas analyst with CIBC World Markets Inc. in Calgary. "This is a real bonanza for the industry, the Alberta economy and investors in Canadian oil and gas stocks."

For Canadian consumers, though, it's quite a different story. Across the country this summer drivers have grumbled mightily about steep hikes in the price of gasoline, including increases of as much as 15 cents per litre in some regions. Normally, consumers could expect some relief, with prices falling back again as summer gasoline consumption abates. But because of OPEC's decision in March to boost oil prices by cutting production, gasoline prices may well remain high into the winter.

Now, for the nearly six million Canadian households that depend on natural gas for heating comes what amounts to a double whammy on the energy-pricing front. Already, the average residential heating bill in Alberta has increased by up to $5 per month—or $60 annually—due to the recent jumps in natural gas prices. But the real pinch could be felt this winter—particularly if it's a severe one. In that event, some oil industry analysts are predicting that natural gas prices may jump by another 50 per cent or more—adding up to $20 per month to the average home heating bill. It is a prospect that makes many consumers nervous. "I expect our heating bills will be atrocious this winter," says Jack Fitzsimonds, a retired Edmonton auto mechanic who, like the vast majority of Alberta homeowners, relies on natural gas. "I don't like it, but I don't know what a person is supposed to do about it."

In some ways, the recent spike in natural gas prices marks the culmination of some dramatic shifts that have taken place in the gas industry over the past 15 years. Until the mid-1980s, governments required that gas producers maintain a 25-year supply of natural gas before they could export any of the commodity out of the country. A fixed export price was also strictly enforced. Deregulation of the gas industry, beginning in 1985, was supposed to allow traditional supply and demand market forces to more fairly determine the pace of drilling and the price paid to producers. But it didn't always work that way.

For many years, gas supplies in Western Canada far exceeded the capacity of existing pipelines to deliver the resource to market. The resulting gas glut served to depress prices to the benefit of consumers. But recent major pipeline expansions are helping to change all that. Additions completed last winter to the Foothills-Northern Border pipeline, which runs from Alberta to Chicago, as well as to the TransCanada pipeline, have increased Western Canada's export capacity by 1.1 billion cubic feet per day. The massive $4-billion Alliance pipeline, running from northeastern British Columbia through Alberta to Chicago, will add another 1.3 billion cubic feet when construction is completed next year.

The improved ability to take the gas to market coincides with escalating demand for Canadian natural gas in the United States, where it is becoming the fuel of choice for both residential users and for new gas-fired electric generation plants. Those plants power the air conditioners that have been pressed into round-the-clock service this summer by the heat wave gripping much of the United States—another factor that has helped drive up demand at a time of year when gas consumption is typically low.

While demand is on the upswing, the amount of gas being stored in Canada and the United States for this winter's peak heating period is down because of reduced drilling activity earlier this year. The combination of tighter supplies, increased demand and greater pipeline capacity is what has pushed Canadian gas prices up from $2 per thousand cubic feet last August to the current level of about $3.25—the highest summertime prices since deregulation took effect.

What happens next, analysts say, depends largely upon the weather. Linder predicts that if the coming winter in North America is mild, the current price for natural gas could drop by up to 50 per cent. On the other hand, he says, a very cold winter may mean further price hikes of 50 per cent or more. Others, such as Rick Roberge, an energy analyst with Pricewaterhouse-Coopers, are more conservative. Roberge says a more likely scenario is for the price to remain for the foreseeable future between $2.75 and $3 per thousand cubic feet—a level that would still mean much hefoer heating bills this winter.

One of the coropanies benefiting from the buoyant gas market is Calgary-based Anderson Exploration Ltd., which has seen its share prices increase by about 65 per cent since March. Company founder J. C. Anderson, a veteran of more than 30 years of the oil and gas trade, has seen his share of troughs and triumphs. Anderson told *Maclean's* he believes higher gas prices will now be the norm "because the fundamentals have changed." Canadian production is capturing a growing share of the large U.S. market. The American demand for natural gas continues to grow at a rate faster than indigenous production. And, says Anderson, recent pipeline expansions mean "we finally have the transportation capacity to get the gas out of here."

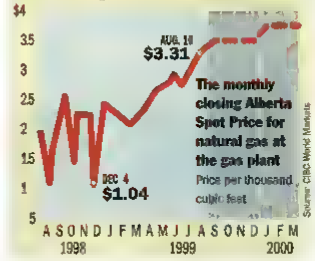
Like many in the oilpatch, Anderson has paper-thin patience with complaints about how higher prices affect those who rely on natural gas. "If the price of milk goes up, consumers bitch—and so do I," says Anderson. "But the fact is that gas prices have been pretty damned favourable for the past 15 years." It is a sentiment echoed by many oilpatch analysts. "I believe the residential natural gas consumer has enjoyed a huge discount in recent years," says Linder. "He'll now have to pay a fair market price. There is no price gouging, no collusion here. Just a basic supply and demand situation."

Not surprisingly, such market arguments fail to impress many everyday natural gas users, including Fitzsimonds. "It's Alberta's natural gas," he says. "At one time, we used to talk about those eastern fellows freezing in the dark. Now, the industry seems to be saying to us, 'Pay your dollars and cents or we'll sell it all to somebody else.'"

Albertans like Fitzsimonds can at least take comfort in knowing that some of the extra money they shell out in heating costs may not leave the province. According to provincial budget estimates tabled this spring, every 10-cent increase in the price of natural gas pours another $167 million a year into the Alberta treasury, while every $1 per barrel hike in crude oil prices translates into another $135 million in annual royalty revenues. Residents of other provinces don't have a similar cushion—or much choice but to ante up. As Jenny Hillard, a vice-president with the Ottawa-based Consumers' Association of Canada, points out: "In a country like Canada, it's not a question of whether you can can afford to pay for heat—you simply have to." As winter approaches, many beleaguered consumers may feel they have little option but to pray for a green Christmas. m

Natural gas heats up

The price of natural gas has been climbing sharply. CIBC World Markets predicts it will reach $3.75 per thousand cubic feet in the first quarter of 2000, up from an average of $2.26



A bid for global supremacy

Alcan's merger with two European partners creates a new No. 1, if briefly

Jacques Bougie is in a punchy mood and apologizes for it. The 52-year-old chief executive of Alcan Aluminium Ltd. has not slept enough and has only 20 minutes before he must leave for an overnight flight from London to Montreal. Bougie is squeezing in a conference call with reporters to discuss the impact of Montreal-based Alcan's $28.3-billion merger with Pechiney SA of France and Swiss-based Alusuisse Lonza Group Ltd (Algroup)—a deal that creates a global aluminum powerhouse. He tersely dismisses a suggestion that the merger will compromise Alcan's Canadian identity, and has little interest in discussing the aggressive expansion plans of Pittsburgh-based rival Alcoa Inc. "I'll be much more relaxed tomorrow," Bougie promises. "By then I will have slept a few hours."



Bougie: the Canadian will head the newly merged giant

But in the aluminum business, there appears to be little rest for the weary. Less than a day after the Alcan-Pechiney-Algroup merger was announced, Alcoa made an $8.3-billion hostile bid for Richmond, Va.-based Reynolds Metals Co., the third-biggest aluminum company in the world. Two days after that, Michigan Avenue Partners, a little-known Chicago buyout firm, entered the bidding for Reynolds with an offer it said was richer than Alcoa's. But if Alcoa is successful, the acquisition of Reynolds would vault Alcoa back into the No. 1 spot, ahead of Alcan and its new partners. Bougie left open the possibility of Alcan and its partners making a counteroffer for Reynolds, but analysts called such a move unlikely.

Before the Alcan deal can be finalized, it will have to pass muster with government regulators in both North America and Europe. Furthermore, says Don Thompson, a professor at York University's Schulich School of Business in Toronto, the merger must gain the support of Pechiney's unionized workers, who under French labour law have a veto. "The least efficient plants of the three producers are by far Pechiney's," says Thompson. "If the employees see job losses and can't be mollified, they can kill the deal."

If it gets the green light, the Alcan merger will create an aluminum-churning behemoth with 91,000 employees in 59 countries and combined 1998 revenues of $32.1 billion. Bougie is to be chief executive of the new firm, temporarily named APA, but will step down two years after the deal closes, at which time Pechiney chairman Jean-Pierre Rodier is expected to take the helm. Alcan's Montreal headquarters will become APA's head office, but Bougie will be based in New York City. A European office is also planned. The board will be composed of four members from each of the three companies. Daniel Roling, a senior metals and mining analyst with Merrill Lynch in New York, is "very bullish on the deal." The trouble with any commodity sector, says Roling, is that there are many small producers who, when prices are low, try to sell more product, which in the aluminum business has resulted in surpluses that have pushed prices even lower. "The creation of another well-run, large company will bring discipline to the market, which it sorely needs," Roling says.

APA's plan is to cut nearly $900 million in annual costs within two years. Algroup CEO Sergio Marchionne says he expects about 4,550 jobs to be lost. None of these, however, will be in Canada, Bougie says. (Alcan has a Canadian workforce of 11,000—8,000 in Quebec and most of the rest in Kitimat, B.C.) Union leaders are not so sure. Jean-Marc Crevier of the Quebec Federation of Labour says some Alcan plants in Quebec use older technology and could be closed. "Alcan can say anything it wants to reassure us," Crevier says, "but things move so fast it's scary."

The pace is unlikely to slow, say analysts. Excess global capacity and low aluminum prices encourage consolidation. Bigger companies can spend more on research and development, finding ways to tap the lucrative automotive sector, where the use of aluminum is growing the fastest. Smaller operators may also want to consolidate to keep pace. Thompson, for example, thinks Reynolds might make a play for Norway's Norsk Hydro AS, while APA could try for Houston-based Kaiser Aluminum Corp. More deals, it seems, will inevitably be forged.

Danylo Hawaleshka



Deirdre McMurdy

Labour woos the pinstripes

Pinstriped suits and power lunches. These probably aren't the first images to come to mind with the Canadian Auto Workers Union or labour negotiations. But in the current round of union talks for a new contract with the Big Three car companies, both elements play a key role.

In coming weeks, CAW president Buzz Hargrove and the union's economist, Jim Stanford, will take their message from the bargaining table to the boardroom. They are making presentations to some of Bay Street's top investment dealers and bankers, opening the lines for questions in subsequent conference calls. "We are doing exactly what companies do when they want to sell something to the Street," Hargrove explains. "We want to sell them on our story, to dispel the idea that we are greedy and unreasonable. Perceptions are crucial."



Hargrove: taking the word to the Street

Shareholder perceptions have never mattered more. Arbitrageurs, mutual fund and pension fund managers now wield considerable clout with company executives and they have shown their willingness to use it. In recent months, their demands have brought major changes at Spar Aerospace Ltd., Jannock Ltd., and Call-Net Enterprises Inc.

By making his case directly to investors and analysts, Hargrove hopes they will exert pressure on Big Three management to accept the CAW's principal contract demands—and avoid a strike. Specifically, he wants broad backing for his push to organize workers in the automotive-parts sector—something the vehicle manufacturers are reluctant to support. Jeff Rubin, chief economist of CIBC World Markets, which is participating in the CAW road show, says, "In Canada, auto-sector negotiations tend to be trendsetting. If there's going to be a breakout issue that affects other sectors, that's going to have implications for the fixed income and the equity sides of the equation."

Although the U.S. car companies do not have shares trading in Canada, the investment community here still has a big stake in avoiding another costly auto strike. The Ontario-based parts business includes several publicly listed companies, such as Magna International Inc., Linamar Corp., Budd Canada Inc. and Meridian Technologies Inc., which have prospered because of the recent boom in North American vehicle sales.

Employment in the sector increased by eight per cent last year and is on track to grow by another seven per cent this year. Still, within days of last year's 7½-week labour disruption at General Motors, auto-parts companies were laying off workers and trimming back production. "There are devastating macroeconomic implications from a protracted auto strike," notes Rubin. "And you get a better sense of how likely it may be from the horse's mouth."

The union's shrewd campaign to develop a consensus with investors and to influence the corporate agenda is significant for several key reasons.

First, it marks an attempt to depart from the blunt, confrontational approach that has characterized auto industry negotiations in the past. The strategy has come about, in part, as a result of the CAW's deliberate efforts to broaden its appeal to include a younger, non-industrial membership. The bulk of the new jobs created in the Canadian economy are in the high-technology and service industries, and the CAW has aggressively moved to organize them. Although the certification at the first unionized McDonald's restaurant was recently revoked, the CAW has organized workers at Starbucks, The White Spot and KFC restaurants.

To attract this younger, more mobile workforce, the CAW has learned to refocus its rhetoric and its tactics—a process personified by Hargrove and Stanford. Although he has become increasingly polished, Hargrove still represents the union's core, its roots in assembly lines and industrial shop floors. But Stanford, 38, has a hip style and laid-back demeanour. According to Hargrove, it was Stanford's idea to meet Bay Street on its own turf.

Second, the CAW initiative marks a watershed in the evolution of the stakeholder rights movement. As investors have ousted executives and enforced performance targets, they have made managers heed outside voices. That has given other outside stakeholders, such as unions and community activists, a new point of leverage—one that the CAW leaders have identified early, and moved to exploit.

But even before the CAW gets to test-drive its new strategy, one key hurdle lies ahead. This week, so-called probing sessions, a round of informal off-the-record talks, begin between the union and the car companies. Soon, the CAW will decide which automaker to target for a strike. Whatever the outcome, however, Bay Street will be braced for it.

A break for Canadian Airlines

The federal government opened the door to a possible merger between Montreal-based Air Canada and financially troubled Canadian Airlines International of Calgary by suspending competition restrictions for 90 days. Industry Minister John Manley said the grace period permits the country's airlines to discuss changes to pricing, routes and potential alliances. (Under the Competition Act, firms are barred from discussing the division of markets.) Temporarily lifting the rules "allows the airlines to be able to talk to each other, to look at sensitive information, without running afoul of the law," added Transport Minister David Collenette.

The move was initiated by Canadian Airlines. The struggling carrier, which came close to bankruptcy in 1996, lost about $125 million in the first half of this year, while Air Canada reported a profit of $76 million. Canadian's CEO, Kevin Benson, has suggested the two airlines look at sharing service on marginal routes. He has repeatedly said his airline needs a cash infusion of up to $500 million by year's end, and has lobbied Ottawa to ease foreign ownership rules. AMR Corp., the parent of American Airlines, already holds a 25-per-cent voting interest in Canadian, the maximum allowed.

A Red Hat takes flight

It was a great week for the Hamilton native in the red fedora. Bob Young, chairman of North Carolina-based Red Hat Inc., saw six million of his firm's shares skyrocket on the first day of trading on the Nasdaq exchange. The share price for Red Hat, the largest distributor of the Linux computer operating system, started Wednesday at $14 (U.S.), surging to close the day at $52.06. The stock finished the week at $85.25. On paper, Young's own stake by the end of that first, heady trading week grew to $776 million (U.S.) from $127 million.



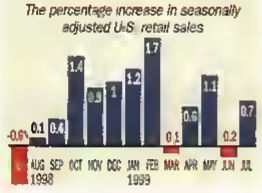
Caroline C. Cobb/News & Observer

Young: his company shares suddenly made him very, very rich

Financial outlook

American consumers appear to be on a buying spree. Sales were up 0.7 per cent in July with more than half of the increase coming from car purchases. Retail sales in the United States have increased by 9.1 per cent from July, 1998. With an economy that shows no signs of slowing, analysts believe the U.S. Federal Reserve will raise interest rates in an effort to curb inflation when it meets on Aug. 24.

Uncertainties about American interest rates are spilling over into Canada. Last week, the big banks raised mortgage rates in reaction to rising U.S. bond prices. The cost of a five-year closed mortgage is now 8.05 per cent, up from 6.9 per cent in January.



Not banking on real estate

Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce is selling its real estate portfolio in one of the largest property offerings in Canadian history. The CIBC package includes investments in 45 office, retail, industrial and development properties, but not the bank's branches. Worth about $2 billion, the portfolio includes Commerce Court, CIBC's Toronto headquarters, as well as La Tour CIBC in Montreal and Commerce Place in Vancouver, Edmonton and Hamilton. CIBC is following the Royal Bank, which is selling 33 properties worth $1 billion.

Louisiana-Pacific wins Forex

Louisiana-Pacific Corp. of Portland, Ore., has won the long bidding war for Quebec-based lumber firm Groupe Forex Inc. after rival bidder Boise Cascade Corp. of Boise, Idaho, backed out. Boise's final bid was $736 million, and the company said it did not feel comfortable trying to top Louisiana-Pacific's $760-million offer. Forex is the leading Canadian maker of oriented strandboard, a plywood substitute.

Moves at the top

Derek Burney, a former Canadian ambassador to the United States, was named CEO of Montreal-based CAE Inc., maker of aircraft simulators. Burney, 59, will resign as chairman and CEO of Bell Canada International Inc. BCI has hired Michael Sabia, 45, chief financial officer of Canadian National Railway Co., to take Burney's place.

Oilsands deal revived

Chevron Canada Resources Ltd. and Western Oil Sands Inc. agreed to each take a 20-per-cent stake in Shell Canada Ltd.'s $3.8-billion Muskeg River oilsands project. The northern Alberta venture was temporarily derailed in March when Australia's Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd. dropped out.

The Bay in play?

Hudson's Bay Co. stock jumped $4 last week amid speculation of a possible takeover. More than 8.8 million shares changed hands on the Toronto Stock Exchange. Sears Canada is one of the firms rumoured to be interested.



Ross Laver

Ready for takeoff

As a teenager in Singapore in the mid-1970s, Robert Milton rarely missed an episode of television's *The Six Million Dollar Man*. A closet Lee Majors fan? "Definitely not," he says, sounding a bit offended. The big attraction was the chance to view a commercial from one of the show's sponsors, the Australian airline Qantas. "There were all these gorgeous shots of 747s flying around," says Milton, talking the way some guys enthuse about a certain magazine's swimsuit edition. If VCRs had existed back then, he would have recorded the ad and replayed it until the tape wore out. He's that much of a plane nut.

Fast forward two decades and Milton can look at planes all he wants. That is, after all, one of the advantages of being CEO of Air Canada, a role he assumed last week at the tender age (for the airline industry) of 39.

The occasion for Milton's promotion from chief operating officer was the abrupt resignation of Lamar Durrett, who has run the airline for the past three years. The timing of the announcement was something of a surprise, but its substance wasn't. In the corridors of Air Canada HQ in Montreal, people have been talking about Milton as a future chief executive almost from the time he started at the company seven years ago.



Pierre Paul Fortin/Maclean's

Milton: a lifelong aviation fanatic

His is the sort of life story guaranteed to make the rest of us feel like pathetic failures. He was born in Boston but spent his childhood roaming from Washington to Hong Kong, Brussels, London and Singapore as his father, an investment banker, chased business opportunities. All that flying bred in Milton a serious fascination with the aviation business. "My mother, who would not tell a lie, promises that my very first word was some variation of airplane," he says. "My real passion was aircraft scheduling. When I was young, I could tell you the details of every scheduled flight in Asia—who did what, where they flew, what types of aircraft they had and the kinds of engines they used. The same way a lot of people think athletes are cool, I used to watch what airline executives were up to. It was my thing."

Like his father, Milton attended Georgia Tech in Atlanta, graduating in 1983 with a degree in industrial management. His father offered him a car as a graduation gift, but he asked for money instead and used it to start his own company, delivering packages with a leased Piper Seneca. By his mid-20s, the firm operated 26 leased planes for major couriers. Milton sold the business in 1988 and later helped found an aviation consulting firm. One of the firm's other partners was Georgia Tech alum Hollis Harris, former chairman of Continental Airlines. They dabbled with starting a discount airline, but couldn't line up financing.

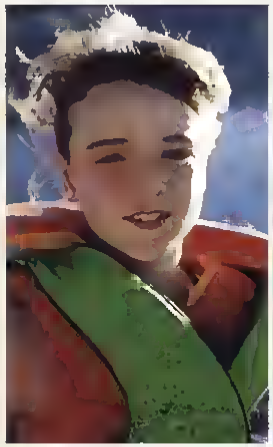
Milton's big break came in 1992 when Air Canada recruited Harris as its chairman and CEO. Straight away, Harris brought in Milton to wind down the airline's money-losing courier operations. Milton was appalled by what he found: a "staggering" lack of willingness to make decisions, an "incredibly inefficient" schedule and an "absolute lack of comprehension of costs." Costly aircraft were sitting unused, their pilots drawing salaries to stay home and watch TV, while Air Canada spent millions to charter aircraft from other carriers.

In 1994, Air Canada discontinued its cargo freighter operations. By then, Milton had overhauled the airline's entire schedule, freeing up seven A-320 Airbuses' worth of capacity. A year later, after directing the launch of a new Asia-Pacific schedule, he was named senior vice-president for marketing and in-flight service. In 1996, he became executive v-p and chief operating officer under Durrett, another former Continental executive and Harris's successor as CEO.

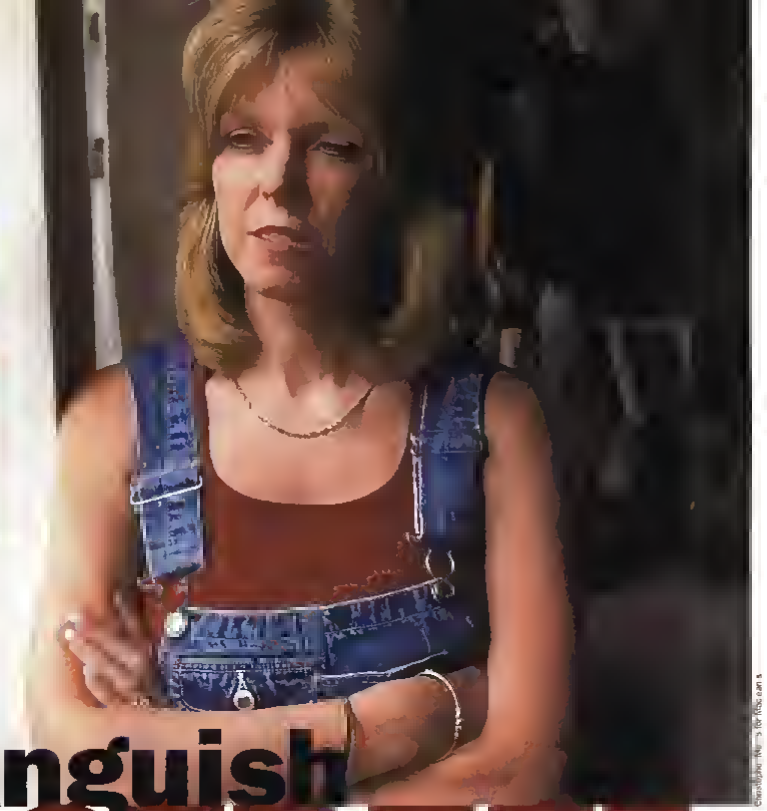
Milton's rapid rise has put more than a few noses out of joint, for years, office legend had it that he is Harris's son-in-law ("I can't win," says Milton, who is married with two small children. "If there's anybody I wouldn't mind being related to, it's him, but we're not related in any way.") Carping aside, Milton gets credit for helping the airline win awards for marketing and customer service. The old Air Canada, bloated and inefficient, is thankfully no more.

What's left to fix? Plenty. Labour relations, by and large, are abysmal, the stock price has been in the tank since last fall's pilots' strike, and shareholders are still smarting from last year's $16-million loss. Milton's goal is to restore confidence among investors, but to do that he needs to convince unionized workers that it's in their own interests to help the company become more productive. "In the past couple of years," he says, "we've looked after the customer and the employees. It's time now to look after the shareholder."

Milton isn't saying yet how he will do that, but only the brave would bet against him. This is a young man in a big hurry.



Catherine at 13, the year she was lured into the sex trade, Sowden in Coquitlam (right): 'You cannot hold children against their will'



The Anguish of the STREET

There are thousands of runaway kids across Canada. Most are escaping abuse or neglect, but sometimes it's the parents who feel the pain

By Shanda Deziel

Amy, a slender girl with big, dark eyes and dyed-blond hair, sits in a conference room in her Toronto-area group home on the day of her Grade 8 graduation. She says she plans to become a criminal lawyer someday, but she has a few problems to work through before that happens. In the past year, the now-14-year-old has run away from her mother's house and outside care facilities more than 30 times. She befriended strangers on the street, slept in flophouses, was found unconscious in a park after an alcohol overdose and once attempted suicide by ingesting a bottle of over-the-counter painkillers. Making matters worse, Amy, who asked that her own and her mother's names not be used, has cystic fibrosis, an illness that, while terminal, can be mitigated by daily medication and a healthy lifestyle. Amy says she ought to stop running, quit smoking, take her medications and obey the rules at home. But she says she likes life on the lam. "I felt fine without my medication," she insists. "I hung out at friends' houses, went to parties, drank, just had fun."

None of this sounds like fun to Amy's mother, 38-year-old Barb. Sitting in the living room of her comfortable Toronto home, she draws on a cigarette and recounts the changes in Amy's behaviour over the past year. It began after Barb, Amy and her eight-year-old brother moved in with Barb's longtime boyfriend and his two grown children. "She was not very happy about the rules and wanted to have a lot of freedom," recalls Barb. Amy began acting out, and last October, after being grounded, she snuck out the downstairs window and disappeared for more than a day. That soon became Amy's answer to all conflict. After an argument, she would swear at her mom and walk out the front door, only to show up days or even weeks later, sometimes in the custody of the police.

Barb had no way of knowing where her daughter would go each time, or if Amy was taking her medication. What she did find out while repeatedly trying to bring her daughter back home was that Amy is among a record number of runaways in Canada. Police departments across the country received 48,388 calls about runaways last year, up 2,861 from 1997 and 8,015 from 10 years ago. Most runaways take off in summer: many rural and suburban kids simply head to the nearest city, but some kids on the East Coast set off for British Columbia. "No matter how much we try to stop it or prevent it, it still happens," says Pascale Hough of Operation Go Home, a national organization based in Ottawa that helps street youth reunite with their families. "It is a very big problem."

Experts say most kids are running away from abusive households, and child-protection laws are drafted to shield those kids from further harm. "I see over 1,000 kids a year," says Tim Crooks, a Halifax youth program worker, "and it is seldom that they are out for the experience of it all. They come to us as a result of horrific experiences." But some kids do run away from caring, non-abusive homes, and when that happens, child-protection laws can prevent concerned parents from regaining custody. Police routinely have to tell parents that, even when they know where the runaway child is, there is nothing they can do. "Basically our hands are handcuffed and chained to a ball, which is encased in cement at the bottom of the proverbial lake," says Staff Sgt. Doug MacKay-Dunn of the Vancouver police, who has worked with street kids for 28 years.

The problems do not end there. Police and parents across the country lament that there are too few resources to house runaways. In Toronto, for instance, there is a strong network of facilities and care workers to help the homeless, but officials at the city's Children's Aid Society say there are not enough places to house the 10- to 15-per-cent increase in youth they have seen each year. "We have trouble getting and keeping kids off the street," says Bruce Rivers, the CAS executive director. "Right now, there is a tremendous shortage of residential beds." It is particularly difficult to find facilities for 16- to 18-year-olds, who in some provinces do not qualify for assistance as "children," yet are too young to collect welfare. "They slip through the cracks," says Crooks.

Even when group homes and counselling programs have available spaces, the kids have to meet certain criteria—many government-funded facilities only admit kids who have serious psychological problems or have committed crimes. "Your child has to be a paranoid schizophrenic or a murderer in order to get help," says one exasperated parent.

The laws that govern child welfare vary from province to province, but they uniformly restrict what police and social agencies can do to take adolescents off the street, return them home or confine them in order to protect them from themselves or others. In Ontario, for instance, police need a warrant of apprehension for children under 16 and can do nothing for those over that age. In British Columbia, police and social workers can speak with street kids to assess their risk, but after that, MacKay-Dunn says, "if they want to walk, they'll walk." In several provinces, kids can be placed in a secure facility, but only when they have been deemed serious risks to themselves.

Federally, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms ensures that children have a large say in their own lives and any treatment necessary. And once they have become streetwise, kids know their rights and how to make them work. It only took Amy a couple of runs before she knew she didn't have to get into the police car and go home. Once when she was being held at a locked psychiatric facility in Toronto, she retained legal counsel and went before a panel to argue why she didn't belong there. "Amy is far ahead of the system," Barb says. "Each time we begin to catch up with her, she foils us again."

Runaways Rusty and Paul say they are regularly hassled by police, but they know no one can stop them from living on the street in downtown Toronto. And they also know police are undermanned—Toronto has more homeless kids than any other city in Canada, with estimates running as high as 10,000 to 12,000 at any given time. Over a breakfast of pancakes at a Yonge Street diner, Rusty and Paul say they ended up on the street the usual way—by escaping dysfunctional homes. Rusty, a rail-thin 17-year-old who says he never takes off his in-line skates, was 13 when his mother dropped him off at his father's house and left town. When his dad came home that night, he told the boy to go away.

That left Rusty on the street for three months, until one winter night he was so cold he called the operator

Street-smart kids know how to exercise their rights

because, by law, no one can stop them from living on the street



Christopher Morris for Maclean's

Staff Sgt. MacKay-Dunn in Vancouver: 'Basically, our hands are handcuffed and chained to a ball which is encased in cement at the bottom of the proverbial lake'

from a pay phone and asked for help. He spent the next three years in the custody of children's aid, and several months ago, he used his legal right to sign himself out of the home, opting to live on the streets. Now he sleeps in stairwells and parks, and spends his days selling pot and squeegeeing. "On the street, I feel I'm doing something, making a stand, not wasting away in a room peeking out of a crack of a window," he says. He claims he can make $300 a day squeegeeing and, while he is trying to save his money for an apartment, Rusty admits that a lot of it goes to drugs.

Paul, meanwhile, ran from a physically abusive father and has been on the street since he was 14. He has also been sent to juvenile detention three times after being caught breaking and entering. "I will stay on the streets until I find something that is just right," says the 19-year-old, whose youthful smile reveals cracked and missing teeth. "Rusty thinks I am too much of a dreamer, but I just envision the perfect life and I don't want to settle for anything less." One of his dreams is a road trip to Arizona with their savings. Paul admits he has grown weary of living without a roof over his head, particularly the mornings being roused from make-do quarters by police. But Rusty says he enjoys the camaraderie of the street. "Between six and 10 at night," he says enthusiastically, "everyone is out, just having fun."

For one chronic runner in Quebec, the lure of the streets is more powerful than a court order. Cat, a bleary-eyed 17-year-old, says a judge ordered her to live with her mother north of Montreal until she turned 18, and to stay away from the city for a year. But Cat left home again recently and now spends some nights at Montreal's Le Bon Dieu dans la Rue, an overnight shelter for street kids, and others in a park. She says she doesn't need much money to live on and can go two or three days without eating. She, too, does squeegee work and also panhandles. At 16, when she was shooting drugs, Cat resorted to giving men oral sex for money. She charged $40 each time, but says she stopped after two months, unable to keep doing it. Since then, she has warned other female runaways to stay away from prostitution.

Born to a teenage mother and an alcoholic father, Cat ran away at 13 after, among other things, she says she was sexually abused by her grandparents. "There were always conflicts," says Cat. She says she and her mother are "two hard-headed" people. When she was younger, they clashed over issues such as her mother setting limits on how late she could stay out. Now, she says, the conflicts revolve around things such as her drug use—Cat says she continues to use cocaine, mescaline and crack.

As horrifying as home life is for some kids, the street can be just as mean. According to a survey by Operation Go Home, 69 per cent of runaways use drugs, another 69 per cent consider suicide, 33 per cent have prostituted for money and 20 per cent say they have exchanged sex for shelter. Those statistics add to Barb's anxiety, even though Amy has been in the custody of the Catholic Children's Aid Society since January. After all, Amy has run from group homes, too, and when that happens, Barb only hears about it secondhand. "Amy is a kid who still sleeps with stuffed animals," Barb says sadly. "It is miserable running with a backpack, not showering, not eating regularly, to not know where you'll stay. I want her home."

Diane Sowden of Coquitlam, B.C., knows the feeling. Her daughter Catherine was recruited by pimps at age 13 to work in the sex trade, and over the next six years Sowden and her husband would occasionally see their daughter on the street and "she would smile and wave." "Once," says a incredulous Sowden, "my husband grabbed her and forcibly tried to take her home. We were told by the police if we did it again, *we* would be in trouble. You cannot hold children against their will."

Sowden sees the necessity of laws that protect abused kids from the horrors at home. But in her case, the laws worked the other way. She and her husband could not keep Catherine from spending the next six years living on the street, addicted to crack cocaine and then heroin, prostituting herself and producing two crack-addicted babies. The babies have since been placed in a safe home, and Sowden says that Catherine, now 19, has left the province, kicked her drug habit, found a job and is getting back on her feet.

Having found little or no help from existing programs, Sowden has taken matters into her own hands. She formed the Children of the Street Society, a community group that lobbies governments for changes in legislation that will confront child prostitution, a problem of epidemic proportions in British Columbia. Those pleas have been heard—the subject was on the agenda last week at the premiers' conference in Quebec City. Officials in Vancouver estimate there are dozens of kids selling sex on the streets on any given night. "It is frightening how quickly kids can be recruited, often right out of their schools," says Vancouver's MacKay-Dunn. Sowden's group is petitioning to have the legal age of consent raised higher than 14, where it currently stands. She also participated in the Secure Care Working Group commissioned by British Columbia's ministry for children and families to look at the option of locking high-risk children up against their wishes.

Amy's mom, Barb, has found some solace in another community group, the privately funded Parents for Youth, which offers therapy for parents of out-of-control adolescents. "These kids make parents sick, they break up marriages, parents lose their jobs, they are all-consuming," says Meg Thompson, the facilitator of Barb's group. Parents for Youth focuses on the needs of parents first and Thompson counsels parents to set strict guidelines instead of compromising with stubborn kids.



Scott Mitchell—Maclean's

Thompson of the privately funded Parents for Youth in Toronto: 'These kids make parents sick, they break up marriages, parents lose their jobs, they are all-consuming'

Some people become so frustrated by their kids' behaviour

and the lack of recourse that they take drastic action

Barb says she is also trying to detach herself emotionally, but she cannot stop worrying about Amy's health. With good reason: Miriam Kaufman, a pediatrician at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto who specializes in teenagers with chronic illnesses and disabilities, says street life is especially dangerous for children with cystic fibrosis. They require various medications and regular chest physiotherapy to relieve the congestion in their lungs—congestion that, left untreated, breeds infections that can cause death. Add to that the irregular sleep, bad diet, smoking, booze and drugs that go with street life, Kaufman says, and Amy is "seriously jeopardizing her chances of getting into her 20s."

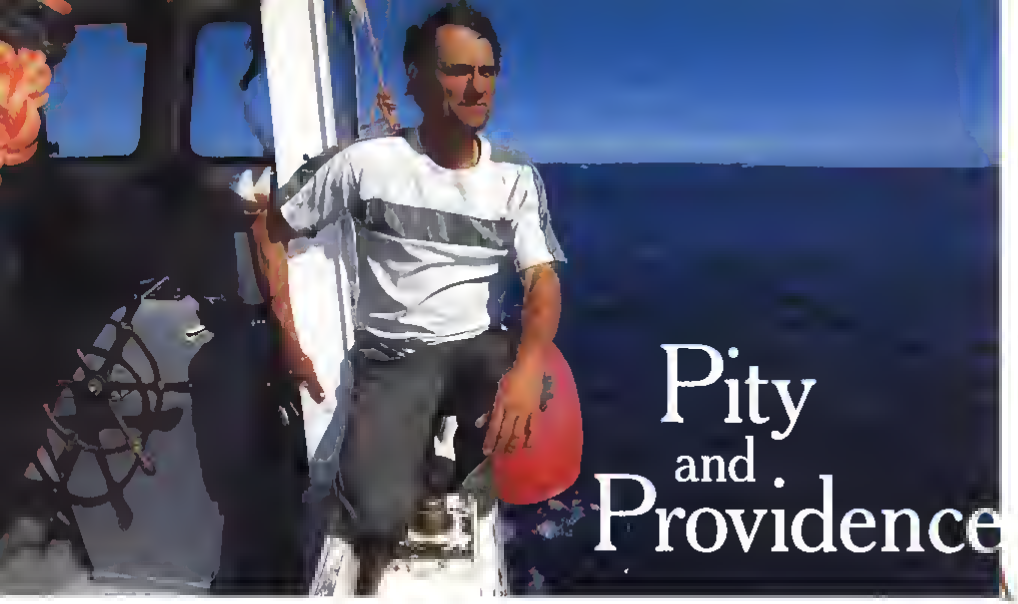
Some parents become so frustrated by their children's behaviour and the lack of institutional recourse that they take drastic action. Manitobans Bob and Mary Smith, who asked that their real names not be used, say they exhausted all local options to help regain custody of their daughter, who began running away when she was 14. She spent a year in foster homes, group homes, adolescent treatment centres and psychiatric lockups, and still she ran.

The Smiths turned to a private treatment centre in the southwestern United States. There, their daughter was taken to a locked facility and then enrolled in a tough wilderness education course. She and other kids were housed in a motel under 24-hour surveillance for a week of detoxification, during which time they were monitored for drug levels. Then they were sent into the wilderness for a month in groups of six, accompanied by six staff, to test themselves against the elements. As a team, they had to push a 360-kg cart filled with all their personal belongings across a desert. They ate only vegetarian food with utensils made out of found pieces of wood. They performed a series of daunting but safe physical challenges such as rock-climbing and rappelling.

All the while there was intensive group therapy and a lot of individual counselling, and back at the treatment centre, the parents went through counselling, too. For the Smiths and their daughter, the treatment, which lasted nine months, worked. Their daughter has been home for a year, drug-free, and is a changed person. The Smiths, who paid $100,000 for the treatment, say it was worth every cent. "We are grateful for every day that she is with us and never take it for granted that she is at home," Mary says. "We owe our daughter's life and our family's health to the facility."

If she had the money, Barb says she would opt for boot camp, too. That's because Amy, after four months in a group home in western Ontario, recently disappeared for five days after being allowed an unsupervised walk for good behaviour. She did return, but no one knows for how long, and Barb wonders when—or even if—her daughter will ever come home again. Amy wonders herself. "I do want to go home," she says. "I just need to work out all the stuff that is going on in my life." Until she does, her mother will wait, and worry.

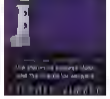
With Brenda Branswell in Montreal



Conrad aboard the Jubilee. 'I remember praying for a purpose for me being out there'

Pity and Providence

The Maclean's Excerpt



Nova Scotia fisherman who rushed to the horror-filled site of last year's Swissair crash came face-to-face with the big questions of life and death.

It is almost a year since Swissair's Flight 111, bound for Geneva from New York City, crashed in the Atlantic Ocean 13 km off Nova Scotia, killing all 229 people aboard. In Flight 111, *published this week, Halifax author Stephen Kimber re-creates the events leading up to the disaster last Sept. 2 and the response of dozens of fishermen who put out to sea in the dark in a futile search for survivors. One was Robert Conrad, 52, who had fallen asleep in front of his TV after an exhausting 16-hour workday. When he awoke before midnight at his home overlooking St. Margarets Bay, 45 km southwest of Halifax, a newscaster was relaying details of an unfolding disaster. Realizing that a plane had gone down just offshore, Conrad took his fishing boat, the Jubilee, out to the crash site. He was soon to learn that this was not a rescue mission. An excerpt.*

SEPT. 3, 1998, 12:30 A.M.

Robert Conrad had heard one report of survivors on his radio, but then that had quickly been changed to a request for a body bag. Everyone else was talking about bodies. On the radio now he heard the skipper of the Island Venture, a fishing boat out of Tancook, talking to the captain of the naval supply ship HMCS Preserver. The skipper had radioed in that he'd found a body and he wanted someone to come take it off his boat. Immediately. "You could tell he was a wreck emotionally," Conrad recalls. "He gave his position and then he just lost it. I remember his expression. He said: 'I can't take this. I'm getting out of here.' And I thought, 'What can I do?' I remember praying for a purpose for me being out there. And then my mind went back to this program I'd seen on TV a while back. There was this lady in Ontario, a retired woman with a deep sense of compassion for people who were dying in the hospital with no one around in their final moments. She'd made it her mission to make sure that no one would ever die alone. And I thought to myself, 'If I can find even a victim who has perished and be with them so that they're not alone in the darkness on the water, then that is something I can do that would make my going out there worthwhile.' "

Dan Callis for Maclean's

And then suddenly, he was in the middle of the crash site. He turned on the Jubilee's spotlight and cast it over the heaving waters. "The pieces were so small," he marvels. "Thousands of bits and pieces, nothing bigger than the size of a magazine as far as you could see." He was grateful he had at least ended up in a section of the debris field with fishermen he knew. He shone his light over at the DCD Rocker, off to one side. "I could see that they had a body cradled to the side of the boat and they were having trouble lifting it aboard."

Conrad began doing circles of the area to see what he could find, to see who he could be with in their final moments.

3:30 A.M.

In the eerie glow of his boat's spotlight, the object in the distance on the water looked to Conrad like a doll. He manoeuvred the Jubilee closer, then used his eight-foot gaff to pull the object alongside. But it wasn't a doll. It was a small child, "unlike any I had ever seen." The toddler's naked body had been so mangled in the crash that Conrad couldn't tell whether it was male or female. Strangely, he would say later, he felt no particular horror at this moment. "It was just like it was a mechanical act," he would explain. "You function because you need to function." He lifted the child aboard, put the body on the deck and radioed his find to the Preserver on Channel 8, the channel set aside for the fishing boats to communicate with the on-scene commander.

"Flash your spotlight so we know your location," Cmdr. Rick Town radioed back calmly.

"There was something about his voice," Conrad says now. "No one who was not there can appreciate what the sound of the right human voice is. I took that sound with me and I remember thinking, if I ever find out who that person is I want to seek him out and thank him for what he did that night. I want to get acquainted with that voice." (When they did meet, two months later, Conrad says he was surprised to learn how hard-won Town's radio-controlled calm really was. "He had 50 men on the bridge with him and it was chaotic, he told me. They weren't trained to manage anything like this either. But then, none of us were.")

Whether it was Town's soothing voice or his own determination to do the right thing for those who had died that night, Conrad managed to keep the horror of it all at a distance at the time. As he waited for the Preserver's barge-like recovery vessel to make its way to him, he looked down at the child lying on the deck, naked. "I thought it shouldn't be so undignified, even in death."

He radioed the DCD Rocker, which was circling nearby. "Do you have anything onboard I can use to wrap a child's body in?" he asked. The crew came close, tossed him a blanket. "I knew that this was Providence. I'm a great believer in Providence. I was out there alone. I had a limited capacity to help. That little child was the only one I could have managed to bring aboard. It was like an honour I had been bestowed, to be with that child at that moment." He took the blanket, spread the covering on the deck table he normally used to dress tuna, then gently picked up the child, put it on the blanket, wrapped it "reverently" in the covering and held it close. When the recovery vessel finally managed to manoeuvre alongside in the choppy waters, Conrad took one last look at the child in his arms, then handed it over to the waiting arms of the sailor from the Preserver. "It was a moment of significance for me," he says simply.

And then he went back to work. He could see a partly opened black suitcase floating in the water. He gaffed it over to the side of the Jubilee, but the soft-sided case was already too heavy with water and too slippery with fuel for him to bring it aboard. As it slipped away, he noticed a piece of clothing sticking out of it. Perhaps at least he could salvage that, he thought. He used his gaff to hook it, pulled it in and dumped it on the deck. It was a woman's brown suede jacket.

SEPT. 6, 3:30 P.M.

[Conrad and his wife, Peggy, have several relatives of crash victims to their home by the sea so they can spend some time close to where the plane went down. Among them is Nancy Wight of New York, whose only child, 18-year-old Rowenna, was among the victims.]

Nancy Wight was keen to hear Robert Conrad's story about what it had been like on the water that night. In truth, Conrad needed to talk about that, too—with people who had lost someone in the tragedy and might understand the awful feelings of sadness he was still having. He didn't need much prompting to recount the sanitized version of what he'd seen and done the night of the crash: about finding the body of the toddler and, later, the black suitcase that was too heavy to bring aboard. But he had, he told them, managed to rescue a brown suede jacket from the case as it drifted by.

What did the jacket look like? Nancy Wight wanted to know. Rowenna had packed a brown suede jacket in her black suitcase. In the end, there was too little information for either of them to be absolutely certain, but it seemed likely that Conrad had fished Rowenna's jacket from the ocean that night. It was a bit of Providence, a tie to bind them together. ■

Looking for answers

Since the Swissair disaster last September, investigators and lawyers have been busy:

- Working with salvaged parts still being brought up from the ocean floor, specialists from Canada's Transportation Safety Board are examining evidence of an electrical fire in the ceiling at the back of the cockpit of the MD-11. No date has been set for the release of their report.
- As a precaution, Swissair has removed a sophisticated onboard entertainment system from its entire fleet. Its wiring passed through the ceiling where the fire appeared to start. Last week, operators were alerted to remove an insulating material called mylar from 1,230 planes around the world—at a cost of up to $800,000 per aircraft—because it helped spread the fire on Flight 111. No Canadian planes have mylar insulation.
- So far, Swissair and other defendants are facing claims for $16 billion from the families of U.S. travellers aboard the doomed flight. The airline offered last week to pay compensation for financial losses if the victims' families agree not to seek punitive damages. The airline said it has reached settlements with relatives of five victims in France.

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Claim upheld

A Montreal lawyer who spent about $125,000 on cancer surgery in the United States—after three operations at a Montreal hospital were cancelled—has won the right to be compensated by the Quebec government. Barry Stein told a Quebec Superior Court hearing that at one point a Quebec health official told him that even if he received surgery in Quebec, it would not prolong his life. Stein eventually went to New York City, where he was operated on for liver cancer in 1996 and 1997. His subsequent claim for coropensation was rejected by the Quebec Health Board—officials argued that part of the treatment he received was available in Canada and the rest was experimental. A government tribunal later upheld the board's decision. Noting that Stein's treatment in the United States "saved, or at least prolonged," his life, Judge Carol Cohen called the tribunal's decision "irrational" and "incoroprehensible."

Living right

Older people who go to church or synagogue at least once a week are likely to be healthier and live longer than those who do not attend religious services, according to U.S. researchers. In a six-year study, researchers at Duke University in Durham, N.C., followed nearly 4,000 people over 63. With 1,117 participants dead by the end of the study, the researchers calculated that non-churchgoers were 46 per cent more likely to die than those who attended services. Dr. Harold Koenig, who led the study, said a number of factors—including the support of co-religionists and the benefits of religious faith in relieving stress—may help to explain the findings.



A discouraging word

Billboards arguing that vegetarian men are more virile than meat eaters because of their diet went on display in Regina and Calgary, sponsored by an animal rights organization that has been unable to post its signs in the United States. Officials of Norfolk, Va.-based People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals said they could not find a U.S. billboard firm willing to display its cheeky message, which is based on the fact that diets rich in animal fats can produce hardening of the arteries, a cause of impotence in males. PETA spokesman Bruce Friedrich said some firms objected to the billboard's bikini-clad model. "But I think most of them just figured they get more income from meat producers than from vegetarians," Friedrich added. PETA soon ran out of luck in Canada, as well. Late last week, a spokesman for MediaCom Inc. of Toronto said that, in response to "a ton" of calls from carnivores and women's groups, the corpany would no longer post the anti-meat billboards.

A virus and breast cancer

A virus embedded in the genetic makeup of between 20 and 30 per cent of all men and women may play a role in causing breast cancer, according to an American scientist. Microbiologist Robert Garry of Tulane University Medical Center in New Orleans told a virology conference in Sydney, Australia, that his research team found the virus in 85 per cent of the samples of cancerous breast tissue they tested. He added that the virus closely resembled one that causes breast cancer in mice. If it is involved in causing human breast cancer, Garry added, it should be easy to develop a vaccine to block its activity. But other experts cautioned that the presence of the virus in breast cancer tissue did not mean it played any part in the disease.

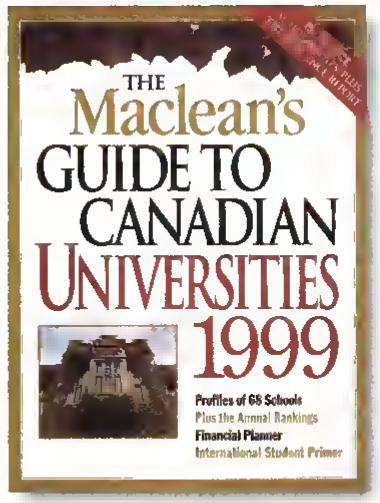
Home too soon

The practice of sending mothers and infants home soon after birth may be harmful to babies' health. A study at a hospital in the Toronto suburb of Scarborough between 1993 and 1997 found as the average length of stay after birth declined to 1.62 days from 2.25 days, the rate of readmission for babies with problems soared to 11 per cent from 4.8 per cent. The study, published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, said the most common cause of readmission was jaundice, a liver problem that can be caused by dehydration. Dr. Michael Lock, who led the study, said discharging mothers and babies soon after birth left little time for advising mothers on infant care.

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Reforming the talk show

Watch out Pamela Wallin, Reform MP **Keith Martin** is starting to muscle in on the talk-show market. Martin, who represents the B.C. riding of Esquimalt/Juan de Fuca, started taping a local weekly, half-hour talk show, *Beyond Politics*, last March. But two weeks ago, it was announced that Shaw Cable had picked up the series and will be airing it nationally by the fall. Martin, 39, says that as excited as he is about the news, "I'll stick to my day job."



Martin, taking politics to cable TV

The show was Martin's way of using time allotted to MPs on local cable stations in their own ridings. Instead of reporting parliamentary news, he created a talk show with celebrities discussing topics that range from the homeless to the United Alternative. Past guests include **Joe Clark,** author **Stevie Cameron** and musician **Tom Cochrane.** Sometimes, Martin challenges his own party's perceived platform. In one show, he looked at safe-sex practices with the rock group Wide Mouth Mason. "The show is a forum to discuss ideas," says Martin, adding that "in Parliament, it is very difficult for solutions to be debated in a meaningful way."



A lighter side of life

Filmmaker Anne Wheeler makes a successful foray into comedy

Canadian film director **Anne Wheeler** is best known for making movies that illuminate difficult human relationships. Her latest film, *Better than Chocolate*, continues that trend—but for the first time with humour. Set in Vancouver, the movie follows the love affair between a restless artist, Kim, and Maggie, who is having enough trouble telling her family that she has dropped out of law school, let alone that she is a lesbian. After her parents suddenly separate, her mother and teenage brother move into her apartment, causing Maggie to lead a double life. The critically acclaimed movie has been a crowd favourite at gay and lesbian film festivals, winning awards in London and Toronto. "I was looking for a comedy to direct and I loved this script," says Wheeler, 52, who lives in Vancouver with her two teenage sons. "I put my way through university doing comedy skits in clubs, so it was wonderful to use old skills."

A native of Edmonton, Wheeler became a high-school music teacher after graduating from the University of Alberta. "I had to teach a lot of marching bands," she says, smiling, "and I didn't last very long." She made her first production, a one-minute commercial entitled *How to Brush Your Teeth*, in 1971. Ten years later, she received international acclaim for *A War Story*, a documentary feature about her father, **Ben Wheeler,** who spent four years as a prisoner of war during the Second World War. Since then, she has directed, produced and written more than 40 films, including award-winners *Bye Bye Blues*, *The Diviners*, *Sleep Room*, *Loyalties* and *The War Between Us*.

Wheeler realizes that *Better than Chocolate* will shock some of her fans. "I do have a loyal following that will go see this film because it is an Anne Wheeler movie, and they will probably be stunned," she says. "But the ultimate sign that this is a crossover film is that I showed it to my sons, their macho friends and girlfriends, and they thought it was the best movie I had ever made!"

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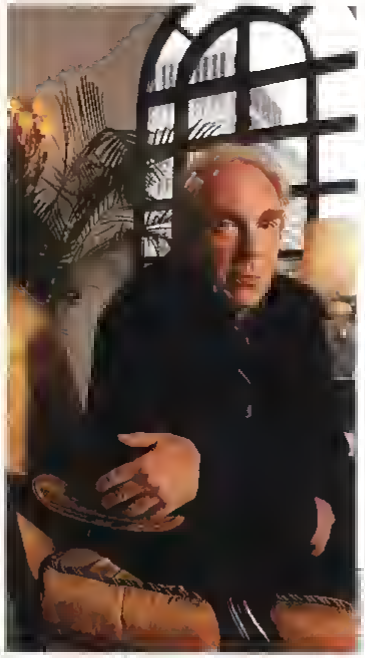
The evil that was Hitler

A writer finds no easy explanations for the Fuehrer

Hitler is explicable in principle, but that does not mean that he has been explained.

—Holocaust historian Yehuda Bauer

More than half a century after the end of the Second World War, armies of historians, theologians and psychiatrists still argue how best to understand Adolf Hitler. New York City writer Ron Rosenbaum could not escape that debate even when it came to picking cover art for his book, *Explaining Hitler: The Search for the Origins of His Evil* (HarperCollins). Rosenbaum chose to use a rare baby picture, taken when the future mass murderer was a toddler. Those who look at the photo can read into it what they will—incipient evil, gentle sensitivity, a damaged soul. But if Hitler was a child like any other, something—some trauma from outside—made him a monster. That's an argument that enrages many commentators, who see it as absolving Hitler from responsibility for his actions. In the end, European publishers declined to use the image, while baby Adolf's face gazes out from the North American editions of the book. "And the Israeli version," Rosenbaum notes with a smile.



Rosenbaum writing about the Nazi leader in an effort to 'cleanse the doors of perception'

The baby-picture episode is only one example of the deep fissures in Hitler and Holocaust studies that Rosenbaum found during 10 years of original research and illuminating face-to-face discussions with the explainers. The result is an extraordinary book, sparking ideas that force readers to examine their own preconceptions about the human capacity—and responsibility—for evil. To write *Explaining Hitler*, Rosenbaum interviewed dozens of witnesses and scholars. He visited revisionist historian David Irving in his fortified London bunker, and attended academic symposiums where Holocaust experts viciously attacked Holocaust *survivors* whose opinions were politically incorrect. He even went on a surreal tour of the dictator's home turf where he met an Austrian Fuehrer buff who, blissfully unconcerned with Hitler's crimes, kept repeating that his fellow countryman had been kind to dogs and small children. That prompts Rosenbaum to recall that eight out of 12 death camp commandants were Austrian-born. More poignantly, Rosenbaum rescues from obscurity the writings of a group of courageous Munich journalists who battled Hitler throughout his rise to power in 1933, after which most were murdered.

In the core of the book, Rosenbaum contrasts the views of the two major postwar Hitler biographers: Hugh Trevor-Roper, who argued the Fuehrer was a demented but moral man, convinced of his righteousness, and Alan Bullock, who claimed he was a crafty criminal, ready to appeal to whatever prejudices would carry him to power. Rosenbaum also examines the polar opposites among Jewish scholars. Yehuda Bauer, pre-eminent historian of the Holocaust, who believes only the lack of evidence prevents a full understanding, and Emil Fackenheim, equally as prominent among Holocaust theologians, who says explanation is impossible.

After the war, Fackenheim, who had escaped from Germany to Canada in 1939, decided that even to discuss Hitler was to give him new life, and for two decades concentrated on becoming a distinguished professor of philosophy at the University of Toronto. But in 1967, in the tense days before the Six Day War, Fackenheim abruptly changed his life. He moved to Israel and began to study Hitler. His conclusion: Hitler represented a new kind of "radical" evil—"an eruption of demonism into history." Fackenheim insists to Rosenbaum that attempts to explain Hitler break the philosopher's famous commandment, "Jews are forbidden to grant posthumous victories to Hitler." Such explanations can only end with the loss of faith in a God who failed to save the death camp victims, which would be a triumph for their murderers.



Rosenbaum says his purpose in writing the book was to "cleanse the doors of perception," to sweep away the junk answers blocking true understanding. "But even then," he added, "I'm not sure that a bright, shining explanation will emerge through." His housecleaning is ruthless. The 52-year-old author passionately denounces psychological explanations for Hitler's actions. "They're pathetic," he exclaims, "arrogant, preordained, Hitler-validates-Freud conclusions." Such explanations would effectively blame the death of six million Jews on the dictator's much-rumoured single testicle, or on abuse by his father, or by his mother, or in reaction to the treatment a Jewish doctor provided his mother as she was dying of cancer in 1907. Rosenbaum's own research shows how slender the factual basis is behind any of the psychoanalytical explanations.

Having explained the explainers, Rosenbaum is wary about declaring that any one of them possesses the whole truth. But his sympathetic imagination is clearly fired by a self-effacing American philosopher, Berel Lang, a State University of New York professor, argues that Hitler and his fellow Nazis were consciously evil. They did wrong, not thinking it the right thing to do, not despite knowing it was wrong, but *because* it was wrong. Lang points out how the Nazis had to dehumanize Jews by harsh treatment and incessant propaganda before they could kill them. That proves, says Lang, the Nazis were conscious of Jews' humanity. And there the philosopher put a finger on an aspect of the Holocaust that had long troubled Rosenbaum, but which he could not define—the sheer inventiveness of Nazi evil, its gratuitous viciousness. For Rosenbaum, Lang finally and definitely explained the infamous slogan above the gates of Auschwitz—"Work will make you free." It was a joke.

In conversation, Rosenbaum keeps returning to a talk recorded among Hitler and henchmen Reinhard Heydrich and Heinrich Himmler. The Fuehrer decries a "rumour" that Germany is exterminating the Jews, when all the Nazis are doing is "parking them in the marshy parts of Russia." At that moment, Rosenbaum says, "the three main architects of the Holocaust become the first Holocaust deniers, relishing the murders that had already happened and twisting the knife in the survivors," by obliterating history and memory with an inside joke. It is a chilling but clear revelation of a level of evil that Rosenbaum is determined to let no one forget.

Brian Bethune

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Allan Fotheringham

The wishes of Citizen Black

Konrad Blast, boy tycoon, is in deep danger of becoming a caricature of himself. Why such an intelligent man would make a fool of himself—while providing summer amusement for bored newspaper readers—is one of the puzzlements of our time.

Lord Almost, as Dalton Camp has dubbed him, is involved in this ludicrous Gilbert and Sullivan law suit with the downmarket Jean Chrétien, who has emerged about as petty as Konrad in the whole affair.

He wants, for his "embarrassment," $25,000, which, as some obscure columnist has pointed out, in the Konrad Blast household is known as "lunch money."



This is the man, owner of the very fine *Daily Telegraph* of London, who faced down another colonial, Rupert Murdoch (aka "The Dirty Digger"), in a price was against *The Times* of London. And on Oct. 18 of 1998 *The Sunday Times* published the research of Dr. Terry Kellard, a leading British psychologist who specializes in the study of power and influence.

He ranked Lord Nearly-Nearly as the fourth-most powerful man in Britain—behind only Prime Minister Tony Blair, Microsoft spoiled child Bill Gates and the Lord Chief Justice Tom Bingham.

This left in the dust such as Cherie Booth QC, the barrister who is the PM's wife (No. 50), the despicable Mohammed al-Fayed, owner of Harrods, at 84 and the Queen no less, at 100. Anorexic supermodel Kate Moss checked in at 120 while poor Murdoch, in his own paper, finished down the track at only 13.

So why would the fourth-most powerful man on the Tight Little Island raise such a fuss? A certain columnist on the back page of this here magazine, on Dec. 23, 1985, predicted that the boy tycoon, having acquired the *Telegraph* from its addled owners whose blue blood had perilously thinned, would soon be purchasing the tide of Lord Black of Red Ink.

This would follow, of course, in the storied tradition of Canadian interlopers who lusted after British titles. Max Aitken, of downtown New Brunswick, who left Canada under a cloud over a suspicious cement cartel, was knighted at age 32 and by 37 was Lord Beaverbrook.

The gormless Roy Thomson ("owning a TV station is a licence to print money") bought his title to the House of Lords and willingly gave up his Canadian citizenship. Son Ken Thomson, owner of *The Globe and Mail*, at least has the grace never to use the title he inherited and has never set foot in the House of Lords.

So why would the brilliant Lord Almost, the only man in the universe who has a larger vocabulary than William F. Buckley Jr., covet a spot in the pastureland of chinless wonders, spavined foxhunters and one lord who was caught selling cocaine in the pristine corridors of Westminster.

The answer, so sad, is that Lord Almost is a bully—as are most types born to wealth and power—and he wants it both ways. As do many (but not all) born to wealth and power. Lord Nearly-Nearly wants the privileges of being a Canadian citizen combined with the perks of British toffdom.

Andrew Coyne, one of Mr. Blast's *Post* columnists, has had the courage to point out the truth: the issue is not whether a Canadian should be allowed to accept a British title, the issue is dual citizenship.

Either you believe in one country, or you don't.

Lord Almost, who has lived principally in Britain for some 15 years, never took the necessary steps to acquire British citizenship until he was informed this spring that his lust for lordship would require that. He, thanks to his connections, apparently got it in less than a New York minute.

There is a problem here. Lord Not-Quite in his first years as squire of the *Daily Telegraph* on Fleet Street used to dump on Canada as a has-been, detritus on the world stage.

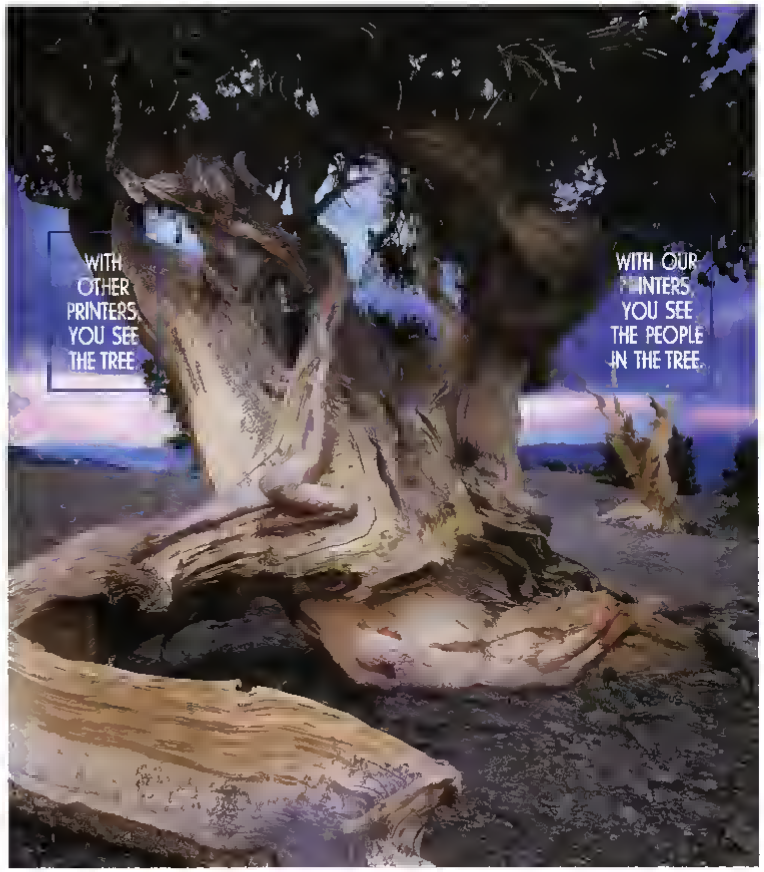
Lately, he has initiated a new cause—Canada should unite in a new vision, allying with a Britain that would reject the European Union and its common currency and connect with the U.S. and the land where he was born.

This all coincided with the fact that the man who wants to have it both ways acquired most of the major newspapers in Canada, a remarkable gulp that neither Hearst, nor Pulitzer, nor Beaverbrook in their day would ever imagine.

Lord Not-Quite, whom I really like because of his arch humour, knows perfectly well that he can't renounce his Canadian citizenship because Canadian law and, more important, Canadian tax regulations forbid unwashed foreigners from owning Canadian newspaper chains.

He wants it both ways, but he ain't gonna get it. I ain't no fan of Chrétien, but Canadian opinion backs him.

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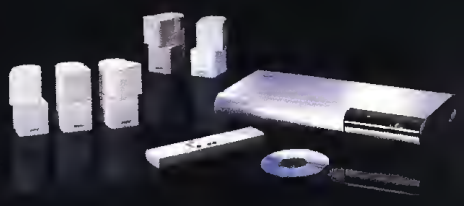
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